

## Billy COTTON

A complete all rounder, Bill a keen sportsman was a footballer, an early motor racing driver and a bit of a musician, but above all a great showman. Born 1899 in Westminster he served as a boy drummer in the First World War. Bill saw some action on the Gallipoli beaches before his under-age status caused him to be shipped back to England. Before the war was over he'd joined the Royal Flying Corps.

By the age of eighteen Bill was playing some amateur football for Brentford, gigging on drums with various outfits around London, and taking any job that came along including a spell as a bus-conductor with London Transport. Soon he was leading his own band and after some out-of-town bookings secured a prestigious West End residency at the Astoria Dance Salon in Charing Cross Road.

In 1929 the band played a very successful season at Ciro's in Paris and the same year made their first variety appearance at the Astoria Cinema (next door to the dance hall). By 1931 Bill was touring the music halls full time, packing the public in, playing up to seven shows a day. By the outbreak of WWII he was wealthy enough to retire and the idea certainly appealed to him. He liked nothing more than spending the time flying his plane, sailing his boat or racing cars at Brooklands. But neither the public nor his musicians would let him go and so he carried on, with even greater popularity on radio and television still to come.

Alan Breeze, vocalist with the band for over thirty five years, joined Bill in 1932 and Doreen Stephens was there by the late forties. Another pillar of strength to Billy during the early years was his pianist-arranger Clem Bernard. It was a big blow to Bill when Clem died suddenly from a cerebral haemorrhage in October 1954, for by then they had been together well over twenty years. Billy himself had several bouts of illness over the years and often the band had to carry on without him.

While big in variety it's from radio that most of us really remember the Billy Cotton Band-show, an essential part of the British Sunday lunchtime, week after week, year after year. Having regularly broadcast since the early thirties, his first non dance-music airing was wise-cracking with walrus moustached comedian Billy Bennett in the show 'Hail Billies', on 3rd July 1939. During the war there was 'Billy Cotton's Song Shop' on the General Forces Programme, but Bill's big radio break came in February 1949 when his Sunday Band Show series began. Initially scheduled for 8.45am (hence the "wakey wakey" intro) but broadcast at 10.30am, it later moved to and settled in its regular midday spot. Described as "dance music with the accent on comedy" it soon became a big hit with listeners. In 1957 the BBC said its two most popular programmes were 'Two Way Family Favourites' and the 'Billy Cotton Band Show'.

From the mid-fifties Billy and his band became just as successful with their BBC TV series 'Wakey Wakey Tavern', due in no small way to his vocalists, who by now included Kathie

Kay. Regular guests on these television shows included Alma Cogan and Russ Conway, both enjoying comic banter with the boss.

The band still continued to do good business on stage and was playing summer seasons throughout the sixties. However, it all came to an end when Bill died on 25th March 1969. A bit of a disciplinarian, Bill as a governor might have sometimes been a little hard to take, but the length of service of many of his musicians and singers must say something. He certainly did his best to keep them fully employed. The listening and viewing public were certainly happy and eager to be entertained by such a showman.

Billy began recording with his London Savannah Band as far back as 1928 mainly on the Piccadilly label. He moved on to Regal, Regal-Zonophone, Rex, Decca and finally made just a few on Columbia.

### Billy Cotton Post-War Recordings

REX

*(Billy Cotton Band most with vocals by*

*Alan Breeze)*

10228	Feb 46	'Let's keep it that way / Last night'
10229	Mar 46	'Under the willow tree / Symphony'
10230	May 46	'Carolina / Rose of Santa Luzia'
10231	Jly 46	'Dengozo / Brazil'
10234	Nov 46	'Sing me a swing song / Limehouse blues'
10235	Dec 46	'I fall in love with you every day / You're nobody till somebody loves you'
10236	Feb 47	'The mission of the rose / The pands walk'
10237	Mar 47	'Sioux City Sue / Make believe world'
10238	May 47	'Something's wrong and that ain't right /

Anniversary song'

10239	Aug 47	'The little old mill / Harriet'
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DECCA

*(The Sentimentalists directed by Billy*

*Cotton)*

*(vocals by Alan Breeze and Doreen*

*Stephens)*

F 8542	Aug 45	'Waiting in sweetheart valley / I'm confessin''
F 8555	Sep 45	'Goodnight, my onderful one, goodnight /
		Just a prayer away'
F 8567	Oct 45	'I'm in love with two sweethearts / The gipsy'
F 8589	Jan 46	'Lonely footsteps / No need for words'
F 8590	Feb 46	'Why can't we be friends / My heart sings'
F 8610	Apl 46	'My heart is dancing with you / Love letters'
F 8626	May 46	'When Alice Blue Gown met Little Boy Blue /
		Kay-ud meelah-falta

(A hundred thousand

welcomes)'

F 8655	May 46	'There's a harvest moon tonight / Save a piece of wedding
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cake for me'

F 8671	Sep 46	'If I had a wishing ring / Forever
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Amber'

F 8696	Oct 46	'I'll always love you / Down in the valley'
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F 8738	Feb 47	'I'm happy for your sake /
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			The things we did				The night the flook fell in	
last summer'					(AB & B)			
F 8785	Jun 47	'You went away and left me /	Just before I		F 9459	Jly 50	'Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner	
fall asleep'					(BC) /		Come into the	
F 8832	Jan 48	'This land of mine / My own Darby			parlour (AB&B)			
and Joan'					F 9479	Sep 50	'Daddy's little girl (AB & B) / Rain	
F 8897	Jun 48	'Galway Bay / Donegal rose'			(B)			
F 8960	Sep 48	'In the shade of the old apple tree /	Down by the Old		F 9531	Nov 50	'If I were a blackbird (AB & choir) /	
Mill Stream'					Stick it on the wall Mrs. Riley			
F 9007	Nov 48	'I'd love to live in loveland with a girl			(BC & AB)			
like you /					F 9564	Dec 50	'The petite waltz / I only saw him	
		When the organ played			once (DS)			
Ave Maria'					F 9568	Dec 50	'The wheel song / Never been there	
F 9053	Jan 49	'A little bird told me / Ave Maria'			before			
F 9054	Jan 49	'When you look into the heart of a			(both AB & B)			
shamrock /					F 9583	Jan 51	'The thing / The flying saucer (both	
		It's time to say a			AB & B)			
prayer again'					F 9596	Feb 51	'What a referee (BC&AB) / Oh! Oh!	
F 9071	Jan 49	'Far away places /			Owen (B)			
sweethearts'		If we can't be the same old			F 9608	Feb 51	'Good luck, good health, God bless you	
					(AB.DS			
		(Billy Cotton and his Band)			and chorus) / All hands on			
		(vocals - AB = Alan Breeze ; DS = Doreen			deck (AB&B)			
		Stephens ;			F 9617	Mar 51	'Tennessee waltz (R&J) /	
		RW = Rita Williams ; BC =			My heart cries for			
		Billy Cotton ; B = Bandits			you (DS & AB)			
		= Sentimentalists ; R&J = Rita & Joyce ;			F 9619	Mar 51	'Can I canoe you up the river (AB & B)	
		B = Bandits ; MG = The Mill Girls ; CC = The			/			
		Cotton Choir)			Legion patrol'			
F 9149	Jun 49	'I've got a lovely bunch of coconuts			F 9644	Apl 51	'Tipperary samba (AB & B) / Da-dim	
(AB & B) /					da-dom			
		Hang on the bell			(DS.R&J)			
Nellie (AB)					F 9647	Apl 51	'The chicken song (AB & B) /	
F 9164	Jun 49	'Beautiful eyes (B) / Down came the			The wabbit song			
rain (AB)					(RW & B)			
F 9182	Jly 49	'Ain't it nice /	Rollin' round the worls		F 9663	May 51	'The music man / Bless 'em all (both	
(both AB)					AB&B)			
F 9288	Dec 49	'Doo dee doo (on an old kazoo) (B) /	Tiddley winkie		F 9678	May 51	'Forty fahs and fevvers on a frush (BC	
woo (AB)					& AB) /			
F 9292	Dec 49	'Shake hands with the luckiest guy in			Eleven more months and ten			
the world					more days			
		(AB) / My little			(AB &			
dreamboat (B)					Johnston Bros)			
F 9311	Jan 50	'Oh! little fish (AB) / The whistling			F 9682	Jun 51	'A little French cafe /	
song (B)					Auld Scotch mother of mine			
F 9329	Feb 50	'Boomps-a-daisy / The cokey cokey			(both DS)			
(both B)					F 9687	Jun 51	'May Kway oh May Kway (BC.DS & B)	
F 9334	Feb 50	'When I met Connie in the cornfield			/			
(AB & B) /					Festival hop'			
		Drink drink			F 9716	Jly 51	'Shot gun boogie /	
drink (B)					The Galloping Major			
F 9352	Mar 50	'The Lord of the Blooming Manor /	Sir Timothy White		(both AB&B)			
(both AB)					F 9717	Jly 51	'Across the wide Missouri	
F 9360	Mar 50	'The French can can polka / Oh,			(AB.DS&B) / All the			
Nicholas!					world is coming to London			
		don't be so ridiculous			(BC.AB&B)			
(both AB & B)					F 9736	Sep 51	'Jezebel (AB) / The blacknote	
F 9380	Apl 50	'They're lovely (AB) /			serenade (B)			
Murphy? (B)		Did anyone tell you Mrs.			F 9741	Sep 51	'Ivory rag / There's another trumpet	
F 9399	May 50	'My thanks to you (AB.DS) / Wakee			in the sky			
wakee (B)					(both AB & B)			
F 9430	Jun 50	'Knees up, Mother Brown (AB & B) /	Roll me over (AB &		F 9760	Oct 51	'Sweet violets / Riley's daughter	
BC & B)					(both AB&B)			
F 9451	Jly 50	'Down by the old Zuyder Zee (AB & B)			F 9779	Nov 51	'Ciribiribin on the mandolin (B) /	
/					The little grey			
		Strolling down the			donkey (AB&B)			
Strand (B)					F 9780	Oct 51	'Longing for you / I love the sunshine	
F 9452	Jly 50	'I can't get a word in for the music			of your smile			
(AB & B) /					(both AB&B)			
		The comb and paper			F 9781	Oct 51	'Rosaline (AB & B) /	
polka (B)					I hope you have a happy			
F 9458	Jly 50	'Two on a tandem (B) /			birthday (DS)			
					F 9795	Dec 51	'The ring fell under the sofa (AB & B)	

/	Dandelion clock		<i>BC &amp; B'</i>	
			F 10139 Jly 53	'A bushel and a peck ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> ) / I'm saving my old love
<i>(DS.AB&amp;S)</i>				letters ( <i>DS</i> )
F 9814 Jan 52	'Shrimp boats ( <i>DS.AB&amp;B</i> ) /	That ever	F 10146 Aug 53	'They're changing guard at Buckingham Palace
loving rag ( <i>B</i> )				/ The Queen's horses
F 9827 Feb 52	'I wanna say hello ( <i>B</i> ) /	There's always room at our	<i>(both AB &amp; B)</i>	
house ( <i>AB&amp;B</i> )			F 10179 Oct 53	'Papa Piccolino ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> ) / When you hear Big Ben
F 9835 Feb 52	'Marchin' thru' the glen ( <i>AB</i> ) /	Rock all the babies to	<i>(DS &amp; choir)</i>	
sleep ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> )			F 10186 Nov 53	'Be mine ( <i>DS</i> ) / Tobermory Bay ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> )
F 9844 Feb 52	'Turn back the hands of time ( <i>DS.AB &amp; chorus</i> )	/ On the steps of old St. Pauls	F 10201 Nov 53	'Where did my snowman go ( <i>MG &amp; B</i> ) /
<i>(AB.choir &amp;</i>				Snow snow beautiful snow
<i>the organ)</i>		<i>Charles Smart at</i>	<i>(AB &amp; B)</i>	
F 9860 Mar 52	'Why worry / Ever so slightly late		F 10206 Dec 53	'I saw mommy kissing Santa Claus
<i>(both BC)</i>			<i>(MG &amp; B) /</i>	The Queen's highway
F 9865 Mar 52	'Oodles of noodles / I'm going to a wedding		<i>(BC &amp; B)</i>	
<i>(both AB.B)</i>			F 10217 Dec 53	'Big head ( <i>AB &amp; BC</i> ) / Santa got stuck up the chimney ( <i>BC &amp; B</i> )
F 9866 Mar 52	'A wedding in Capri ( <i>AB</i> ) /	Silver and gold	F 10226 Jan 54	'Oh! my papa / In the Mission of St. Augustine
<i>(AB.B)</i>				<i>(both</i>
F 9882 Apr 52	'We won't live in a castle		<i>AB &amp; B)</i>	
<i>(DS.AB.chorus) /</i>			F 10235 Feb 54	'Begorrah ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> ) / No matter what they say
<i>(DS.AB &amp; B)</i>		Broken hearted	<i>(DS &amp; B)</i>	
F 9891 Apr 52	'Tell me why ( <i>AB.B.Charles Smitton on organ</i> )	/ The glory of love	F 10244 Feb 54	'Cup final ( <i>BC</i> )' ( <i>Edmundo Ros on reverse</i> )
<i>(AB &amp; B)</i>			F 10266 Mar 54	'The gang that sang Heart of my Heart ( <i>AB.BC &amp; The Gang</i> ) / The Jones Boy ( <i>B</i> )
F 9899 May 52	'Goodbye sweetheart		F 10280 Apr 54	'Voulez vous promenade ( <i>BC</i> ) / Kitchen rag'
<i>(DS.AB.B.Charles Smitton</i>		<i>on organ) / I painted</i>	F 10299 May 54	'Friends and neighbours ( <i>B</i> ) / The kid's last
it ( <i>AB&amp;B</i> )				fight ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> )
F 9915 Jun 52	'The gandy dancers ball ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> ) /		F 10316 Jun 54	'Crazy mixed up song / Eight little choir boys
Noodlin' rag ( <i>B</i> )			<i>(both B)</i>	
F 9923 Jun 52	'Star of hope ( <i>DS &amp; choir</i> ) /	I miss my darling	F 10325 Jly 54	'Bob's yer uncle ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> ) / Do, do, do, do, do, do, do, do it
<i>(DS.AB &amp; choir)</i>				again ( <i>B</i> )
F 9924 Jun 52	'It always starts to rain ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> ) /	Three little	F 10329 Jly 54	'Rollin' down the line ( <i>DS &amp; AB</i> ) / I speak to the stars ( <i>DS</i> )
kittens ( <i>BC &amp; B</i> )			F 10377 Oct 54	'This ole house ( <i>DS.B</i> ) / Somebody goofed
F 9937 Jly 52	'Boom song / Gently Johnny ( <i>both AB &amp; B</i> )		<i>(AB &amp; B)</i>	
F 9947 Aug 52	'Auf wiederseh'n sweetheart ( <i>DS &amp; chorus</i> ) /		F 10383 Nov 54	'When the red, red robin comes bob bob bobbin'
<i>&amp; chorus)</i>		Homing waltz ( <i>AB.MG</i>		along ( <i>B</i> ) / Hopalong Cassidy
F 9964 Sep 52	'Watermelon weather ( <i>RW &amp; AB</i> ) /	You'll never forget about Ireland	<i>(AB &amp; B)</i>	
<i>(AB&amp;chorus)</i>			F 10405 Dec 54	'When Santa got stuck up the chimney
F 9965 Sep 52	'Tonight beloved ( <i>DS</i> ) / Trust in me		<i>(BC &amp; B)</i>	/ Do you love old Santa Claus ( <i>BC &amp; the Kids</i> )
<i>(AB.B)</i>			F 10421 Jan 55	'When you're home with the ones you love ( <i>DS</i> )
F 9990 Oct 52	'I'll walk alone / Rock of Gibraltar			/ He's a real tough
<i>(both AB.B)</i>			F 10459 Mar 55	'The naughty lady of Shady Lane / Hearts of
F 10028 Jan 53	'Soldiers of the Queen' ( <i>various artists from</i>			stone ( <i>both B</i> )
<i>Performance)</i>		<i>1952 Royal Variety</i>	F 10491 Apr 55	'Ready, willing and able / Bambino
F 10030 Jan 53	'The marrow song ( <i>AB &amp; chorus</i> ) /	Lulu had a	<i>(both MG)</i>	
baby ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> )			F 10501 May 55	'Someone else I'd like to be ( <i>B</i> ) / Where did the chickie lay the
F 10041 Jan 53	'Pot luck ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> ) / Valley of roses			eggie ( <i>AB &amp; B</i> )
<i>(DS &amp; B)</i>			F 10524 Jun 55	'Play me hearts and flowers ( <i>DS</i> ) / A present for
F 10058 Mar 53	'In a golden coach ( <i>DS &amp; chorus</i> ) /	Coronation		
bells march'				
F 10096 May 53	'I'm walking behind you ( <i>DS</i> ) /	All over Britain		
<i>(AB &amp; B)</i>				
F 10102 May 53	'London calls / Have you made the day worth			
		while ( <i>both</i>		

Bob (MG)  
F 10546 Jly 55 'Pals (BC) / Why did the chicken  
cross the road

(BC & B)  
F 10602 Oct 55 'The yellow rose of Texas (B) /  
Domani (AB.B)  
F 10630 Nov 55 'The Dam Busters march (narr. BC) /  
Bring your smile along

(AB & B)  
F 10642 Dec 55 'Nuts in May (AB & CC) / A-hunting  
we will go (Uncle AB & the  
Cotton Kids)  
F 10654 Jan 56 'Oranges and lemons / Musical  
Chairs :  
London Bridge is falling down -  
Dickory  
dickory dock (Uncle AB  
& the CC)  
F 10664 Feb 56 'The ballad of Davy Crockett (BC) /  
The one finger  
song (B)  
F 10682 Mar 56 'Robin Hood (DS.AB & B) / Happy  
trails

(DS & AB)  
F 10702 Apr 56 'Lizzie Borden (AB & B) / Little child  
(BC & Maggie  
Shayne)  
F 10739 Jly 56 'The March Hare (AB & CC) /  
Neighbourly

(BC & B)  
F 10754 Jly 56 'Friends (BC & B) / The family`s  
always  
around  
(AB & B)  
F 10767 Aug 56 'Reach For the Sky march /  
Whatever will be  
will be (BC)  
F 10805 Nov 56 'Just walking in the rain / The rocking  
horse  
(both BC &  
chorus)  
F 10826 Jan 57 'Yaller yaller gold / Giant (both AB &  
B)  
F 10841 Feb 57 'The Garden of Eden (AB & B) /  
You don`t owe me a  
thing (BC)  
F 10854 Mar 57 'Amore (AB & B) / Commando patrol'  
F 10857 Apr 57 'Good companions (BC&B) / If only  
(DS&B)  
F 10881 May 57 'Absent friends (AB) / The Amethyst  
March'  
F 10915 Aug 57 'Puttin` on the style' (part of The Lord  
Taverners  
Record)  
COLUMBIA

DB 4095 Mar 58 'Red river rose / Well anyway'  
DB 4120 Apr 58 'Get me to the church on time /  
With a little  
bit of luck'  
DB 4248 Jan 59 'Ain`t you got no `omes to go to /  
Growing old'  
DB 4430 Jan 60 'Fings ain`t what they used to  
be /  
I`d rather  
be just me'  
DB 4555 Nov 60 'Wakey Wakey medley No.1' (both  
sides)  
DB 4641 61 'Broken toys / It had to be you'  
(both v.  
Kathie Kay)  
DB 4837 62 'Is this gonna be a wedding /  
Who`s this

geezer Hitler?'  
DB 4843 62 'If the young ones can be happy /  
Opposites (v.  
Kathie Kay)  
DB 4896 62 ``Til tomorrow (v. Kathie Kay) /  
Someone nice like you

(KK & BC)  
DB 7019 63 'Flash bang wallop! /  
Half-a-sixpence (v.  
Kathie Kay)  
NESTLE

AK 1 'The sound of music /  
My favourite things (v.  
Kathy Kay)  
SUMMER COUNTY

DIS 2 Never smile at a crockodile /  
Second star  
to the right'

## Diana COUPLAND

Diana was influenced by dance music from an early age; her father Denis was for many years manager of holiday camp entertainment and ballrooms. Born in Leeds 5<sup>th</sup> March 1932, she began work as a typist but trained as a dancer. Unfortunately a horse riding accident put paid to that dream, so she switched to singing. Early exposure came at Leeds Locarno and by the time she was fifteen, the family having relocated in London, she was resident at Tottenham Court Road ballroom.

Moving up to the big bands, originally with Teddy Foster she then spent 18 months at the Nightingale Club with Felix King and a spell at Churchills with Frank Weir, before joining Geraldo`s orchestra in June 1949. Her first appearance with the band was on one of Gerry`s 'Tip Top Tunes' broadcasts on Wednesday 8th June. Diana had previously aired with the Sid Dean Band, of which critic Maurice Burman commented "I think this little lady is going to go a long way - she has the rare gift of singing in the same way a good jazz instrumentalist plays".

Diana later became even more familiar to radio listeners during the early fifties for her songs with the Stanley Black Orchestra on their 'Top Score' series, a programme that also featured The Stargazers vocal group and singer Monty Norman, later to become her husband.

After just five months with Geraldo she left because, although enjoyable, she felt she wasn`t developing her style the way she wished. During 1950 Diana was appearing nightly at the Savoy Hotel with the Carroll Gibbons Orchestra, led then by Frenchy Sartell (Carroll Gibbons was the hotel`s Entertainment Director). By 1951 she had changed residence to the Dorchester and was singing to the accompaniment of Cyril Grantham`s music, taking time off during the Festival of Britain to appear with Nat Allen`s Band in the Festival Gardens. From July 1951 Diana was on radio with Paul Adam`s Mayfair Music in a new Tuesday afternoon series 'Turn on the Music' and appeared with the same band in the film 'London Entertains'.

She recorded for Decca, first in a duet on one of Les Howard`s discs and then in November 1951 her first solo release 'I won`t cry anymore'. But it seems her next, 'A guy is a guy' (a re-working of an 18th century English ballad, 'I

went to the ale-house' and a No.1 hit for Doris Day in the States) was her last for some time.

During 1953 Diana went on tour with the Stanley Black Orchestra, where fellow vocalist was Monty Norman again. From early in 1954 she began appearing in variety, touring in the show 'Highlights of Television' that included comedienne Hylda Baker and pianist Dolores Ventura. By August she was playing service camps in the Middle East, adopted as pin-up girl by lads of the R.A.F. she handed out hundreds of photos of herself in a swim-suit. Winter was spent at chilly Southport playing Robin Hood in the Garrick Theatre pantomime 'Babes in the Wood'.

Diana was the voice of Lana Turner singing 'Johnny come home' in the 1954 Clark Gable, Victor Mature film 'Betrayed'. The song was released on M.G.M. Records here and in America. She was also heard on the sound-track of the Gene Kelly movie 'Invitation To the Dance' and her voice was dubbed over Ursula Andress singing 'Underneath the mango tree' in the 1962 James Bond film 'Dr. No'.

Much of 1955 was spent touring in variety with long time friend and fellow singer Monty Norman, including another spell in the Middle East. In September the couple announced their engagement on one of Jack Jackson's television shows and were married Sunday 27th May 1956 in St. John's Wood Synagogue.

During the summer of 1956 Diana was in cabaret at Manchester's Cromford Club described in a review as having "a new sexy slinky slightly risqué style, far from her Geraldo and Stanley Black days".

Her career took a change of direction in 1959, playing the role of Sally in Joan Littlewood's production of the Wolf Mankowitz musical play 'Make Me an Offer' - music and lyrics by Monty Norman and David Heneker - at the Theatre Royal Stratford East. In 1960 she was reported as giving a first rate performance in Shelagh Delaney's new play 'The Lion In Love'. Film roles followed, beginning with the part of a nurse in the 1960 Sophia Loren comedy 'The Millionairess'. Others included 'The Family Way' in 1966, 'Charlie Bubbles' 1967 and 'Spring and Port Wine' in 1970. On television Diana had a support role in the comedy series 'A Little Big Business' that starred David Kossoff and ran during 1964 and '65, but she is probably best remembered for playing a first class leading role as Sid James' wife in the TV comedy sit-com series 'Bless This House' that ran 1971-76.

As the years rolled on, when Diana did make a live appearance it was usually of the cabaret club kind. After a long absence she returned to the small screen, joining the cast of BBC TV's 'Eastenders' in April 2000, playing the battleaxe Maureen Carter. Her last appearance was in an episode of the daytime soap 'Doctors' just a few weeks before she died.

The marriage to Monty Norman, that produced a daughter, finally ended in divorce and in 1980 she married theatre director Marcus Miller. Diana died Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2006 at Coventry, following surgery for a heart condition. She was 74.

Diana Coupland Recordings

## PARLOPHONE

F 2376 Aug 49 (with Geraldo Orch) 'Carnival time'  
DECCA

F 9737 Sep 51 (with Felix King Orch) 'What a cute little hat'

F 9775 Nov 51 (with Les Howard) 'Tell me true'  
F 9793 Nov 51 'I won't cry anymore / Out o' breath'

F 9918 May 52 'A guy is a guy / I thought of you last night'

M.G.M.

MGM 772 Oct 54 'Johnny come home'

H.M.V. (both from current London shows)

POP 690 Jan 60 'I am loved (from Cole Porter's 'Aladdin'

score) / Love him (from 'Make Me

An Offer)'

(acc by Geoff Love

orch)

DECCA

F 13422 Jly 73 'Bless this house / Kids say the darndest things'

## Bert COURTLEY

A self taught trumpet player, Bert had a somewhat varied career. Born in Manchester in 1929, he turned professional after the war and played in the bands of Tommy Sampson, Teddy Foster and Kathy Stobart, whom he later married.

In 1948 Bert was touring with the popular Tommy Sampson Big Band, but left the relative security of that unit to join a small jazz style outfit led by a newcomer, the young attractive tenor-saxophonist Kathy Stobart. Bert was always happiest playing solo horn and was never really comfortable in a big band, although finances often dictated he had to be part of one. By 1949 the Stobart group had folded and he was touring with Ronnie Munro's Orchestra but by 1951 both Kathy and Bert had joined the progressive Vic Lewis Orchestra. It was during this time that Bert and Kathy got married, an ideal match as he was quite a quiet guy whereas Kathy was a bit of a talk-a-holic.

As the fifties rolled on Bert popped up in the bands of Geraldo, Ken Mackintosh and Eric Delaney. Leaving Delaney in 1956 Bert joined forces with bassist Jack Seymour to form the Courtley-Seymour Orchestra, a fine jazz orientated outfit. Lasting little more than a year, the band's undoubted talent was wasted playing mainly strict tempo music in dance halls.

Bert then had spells in various jazz units led by Tubby Hayes, Jack Parnell and Johnny Dankworth before joining Cyril Stapleton's band in 1958. Next came another partnership, this time with baritone sax player Ronnie Ross co-fronting the modern jazz Jazztet. They later dropped that name in favour of the Ross-Courtley Quintet to avoid treading on the toes of the American, Art Farmer - Benny Golson, Jazztet. Although attaining quite a popular following the band never worked to the leader's expectations and folded after about a year.

During the early sixties Bert formed a sextet along with his tenor sax playing wife Kathy Stobart, they had often played in groups together. This was another fairly short lived venture, and afterwards Bert played lead trumpet with Ted Heath and also did a lot of session work until his premature death on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September 1969, just a few days after his fortieth birthday. He was survived by wife Kathy and three sons David, Paul and Peter/

As a leader, Bert's only recording I am aware of is a Decca extended play DFE 6602 'Bertrand's Bugle', featuring his trumpet virtuosity.

## Crane River Jazz Band

First heard in 1948 at Cranford, Middlesex (on the River Crane - hence the name), The Crane River Jazz Band was one of the early beacon carriers of the trad jazz boom of the 1950's. Formed by brothers Bill and Ken Colyer after they left the Merchant Navy, it initially played in a shed at the rear of the White Hart Inn there.

Made up from mainly semi-pro musicians, it suffered a number of personnel changes over its lifetime. The line up in 1950 was Ken Colyer cornet and leader, Monty Sunshine clarinet, John R.T.Davis trombone, Ben Marshall banjo, Pat Hawes piano, Julian Davis bass and Ron Bowden drums. Others to get in on the act during the early fifties included Sonny Morris trumpet, Ray Orpwood trombone, Stan Peacey bass, Phil Dearie piano, Len Page banjo and Pete Appleby drums. The band made a number of records on several labels.

The Crane River Band seems to have broken up around 1953 when Colyer moved on, only to re-appear around the end of the decade led by former member Sonny Morris. A long-player of some of their early fifties recordings was issued by the "77" label (LEU 12/7) in November 1963.

### Crane River Jazz Band Recordings

MODERN			
MM 335/6	50	'Lowdown blues / Crane river woman	
Bill Colyer)		(v.	
DELTA			
D5	50	'Moose march / Kentucky home'	
D6	50	'Gipsy lament / If I ever cease to love'	
MELODISC			
1027	50	'Eh la bas / Just a closer walk with thee'	
1030	51	'Dauphin Street blues / Just a little while to stay here'	
1165	51	'Down by the river / Blanche touquatoux'	
1202	Feb 52	'Sheik of Araby / Sobbin` blues'	
1228	Oct 52	'Careless love / Spicy advice'	
ESQUIRE			
12-013	Nov 51	'Eh la bas' (on one side only of 12 inch 78)	
PARLOPHONE			

R 3427 Sep 51 'I'm travelling' (Saints Jazz Band on reverse)  
 R 3567 Sep 52 'Slow drag blues / T'ain't nobody's business'  
 R 3634 Feb 53 'Till we meet again / Lily of the valley'

## Cranes Skiffle Group

Cranes was another Embassy label nom-de-plume, this time to hide the identity of the Chas McDevitt Skiffle Group who recorded two singles for the label, including their popular hit 'Freight train'. An Embassy EP by the Coffee Bar Skiffers with vocals sounding very much like Nancy Whiskey was also believed to be the McDevitt group, but both he and she say no.

### EMBASSY

WB 223 Feb 57 'Banana boat song / Don't you rock me daddy-o'  
 WB 238 May 57 'Freight train / Cumberland gap

## Tony CROMBIE

Once described as "the noisiest drummer in the world", Tony was also proficient on piano and developed into a first class composer-arranger. Born August 1925 into an East End Jewish family, his mother, then Sophie Britton, had been a pianist for silent films. As a teenager Tony was a keen follower of the American jazz scene, collecting 78's by Armstrong, Ellington, Fats Waller etc.

Aged 14 Tony joined his father working in the fur trade, but a couple of years later had given it up in favour of playing drums in a group at the Mazurka and Bag O' Nails clubs. From here he progressed to the band of Eric Winstone where he continued to develop his natural talent. In the summer of 1947 he joined Ronnie Scott on a five week visit to the States, enjoying first hand what had previously only been available on disc.

Back in Britain he took over the drummer's chair in Tito Burns 'Accordion Club' Sextet, and their regular broadcasts brought him to wider public notice. During July 1948 Tony on drums, with Malcolm Mitchell on guitar and Jack Fallon bass, supported Duke Ellington on his U.K visit.

Hooked on the modern be-bop sound he was a founder member of the Club Eleven sessions and played on a number of recordings in the style. The next couple of years found him playing in several West End club bands, plus a short spell with the new Roy Fox Orchestra. By 1952 he was a member of Ronnie Scott's Modern Jazz Band where he stayed for almost two years.

In January 1954 the first of his many groups, promoted as "Britain's first Rhythm and Blues Band", made its debut at the Flamingo Club with Tony on drums leading Benny Green tenor & baritone sax, Joe Harriott alto, Victor Feldman piano and Lennie Bush bass, with guest appearances from Ronnie Scott and vocalist Art Baxter. By the end of the year the band had expanded to a larger unit with a full line up of singers Annie Ross, Bobbie Breen and Dizzie

Reece. Playing dance halls it was reviewed as "a modern swinging band that is also extremely danceable".

On 7th November 1955 the band left for a six week tour of Israel where their popularity was such that too many people wanted tickets and on one occasion those without tried to gain entrance by climbing over a roof, causing the building to collapse.

By 1956 rock 'n' roll was coming on to the scene and Tony claimed another 'first', changing gear to that style with his Rockets group. Booked by the Delfont Organisation they set off on a variety tour, beginning 10th September at Sheffield Empire. The line up with Tony was now Rex Morris tenor-sax, Jimmy Currie guitar, Red Mitchell piano, Ashley Kozak bass plus singer Clyde Ray. Within a couple of weeks and described as a band "with lots of visual impact", they made their T.V debut on 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium'. Signed by Columbia (he had already made a number of big band sides for Decca) they had a double sided hit when 'Teach you to rock' backed with 'Shortnin' bread' made its appearance in the Top Thirty during October 1956. They also made a 10 inch L.P. 'Rockin' with the Rockets', now quite a collectors' item.

The Rockets appeared with several other rock artists in the 1957 film 'Rock You Sinners', of which one critic said "the acting is so wooden you could light a fire with it". During the life of the Rockets Tony wrote a number of tunes in the rock idiom, including 'Rock 'n' roller coaster', 'Red for danger', 'Forgive me baby' and 'Rock shuffle boogie'.

After two years, rock 'n' roll had become a bit of a bore for Crombie so his group, now known as Tony Crombie and his Men, set off to explore other styles including the latest 'craze', cha cha, but slowly Tony was heading back to his true love, jazz. He made some recordings with a 15 piece sweet style orchestra, but by 1960 was back at the Flamingo Club with a new eight piece group.

Like his earlier bands this one was also short lived, although Tony continued to front various jazz units. With the arrival of Ronnie Scott's club in 1959, Tony spent many nights playing drums within its walls.

The early sixties saw his MJ6 group and occasionally the Rockets turned up again, but more and more he concentrated on arranging and composing. He wrote the music for the 1959 television series 'The Man from Interpol' and scored several films.

Tony continued to be part of the British jazz scene through to the nineties, while diversifying into antique dealing. He had always been a lover of the finest things in life and, known as The Baron by his peers, lived in a home surrounded by antique furniture and objects-d'art. He died 18<sup>th</sup> October 1999 aged 74.

Tony Crombie Recordings

DANCELAND (as Crombie's Zombies)

DL 632 ? 'Autumn mist / Power cut'  
(both Crombie compositions)

DECCA (all T.C. & his orchestra)

F 10424 Dec 54 'All of me / Stop it'  
F 10454 Feb 55 'Perdidio / Love you madly'  
F 10547 Jun 55 'Flying home / Early one morning'  
F 10592 Aug 55 'Flying hickory / String of pearls'  
F 10637 Oct 55 'I want you to be my baby / Three little words'

(both v.

Annie Ross)

COLUMBIA (Tony Crombie and his Rockets unless noted)

DB 3822 Oct 56 'Teach you to rock / Shortnin' bread rock'  
DB 3859 Dec 56 'Sham rock / Let's you and I rock'  
DB 3880 Feb 57 'Rock, rock, rock / The B I G beat'  
(above two 78's also issued as EP

SEG 7676)

DB 3881 Feb 57 'We're gonna rock tonight / Lonesome train'  
DB 3921 Apr 57 'London rock / Brighton rock'  
DB 4000 Sep 57 (T.C. Sweet Beat) 'Sweet Georgia Brown /

Sweet beat'

DB 4076 Feb 58 'Dumplin's / Town special'  
DB 4145 Jun 58 (T.C. & his Men) 'Ungaua / Piakukaungung'  
DB 4189 Sep 58 " 'Rock-cha-cha' / The gigglin'

gurgleburp'

DB 4253 Feb 59 " 'Champagne cha cha /

Shepherd's cha cha'  
TOP RANK

JAR 182 Sep 59 'Man From Interpol theme / Interpol cha cha -

Interpol chase'  
DECCA

F 11345 May 61 (T.C. Quartet with Alex Murray)  
'When you

walked out'  
EMBER

EMBS102 Jly 60 (TC Orch with Ray Ellington)  
'The Madison /

Jump over'

JBS 706 Aug 62 (T.C. Quintet) 'Gutbucket / Just like old times'

## Larry CROSS

Born Russell Titus in New Brunswick, Canada, he went from school into stage work and regular broadcasting. His first band job came while he was still a student and this led to several appearances as singing compere at Lowe's Theatre, Montreal. Next came a year in New York singing with the Richard Himber and Roger Wolf Kahn orchestras. Returning to Canada, Larry starred in many radio shows, one of which ran three years without a break, and became compere of the long-running 'Merchant Navy Show'. Not just a performer, Larry was an Honours Student at the Toronto Academy of Radio Art.

Following wartime service with the Canadian Army he returned to his radio work and made personal appearances coast to coast in the United States. He played Barbara Kelly's husband in a series called 'John and Judy' written by Bernard Braden.

By the early fifties Larry had decided to come

to Britain and in June 1951 Geraldo used him as vocalist on his recording of 'Across the wide Missouri'. The same month Parlophone signed him as a solo artist and released his 'Castles in the sand', a song from the prolific pens of Bob Hilliard and Dave Mann. Over the following eighteen months Parlophone made good use of the Cross voice, issuing a new record almost every month. In November 1954 he was the first artist to appear on the new Embassy label sold exclusively by Woolworth stores. With twelve issues over the next three years Larry covered many hit songs of the day, without ever making the charts himself as the Embassy discs were not allowed to feature in the sales charts.

Larry had several radio airings and his natural mid-Atlantic broadcasting voice ensured him compere work on shows like 'Star Band Cavalcade' and 'Commonwealth of Song'. In 1955 he took over as host of a Radio Luxembourg series, 'People are Funny', sponsored by Pye Ltd. This was a programme that had originated in America in 1942 where the public were encouraged to take part in crazy stunts, with Larry's first show being recorded in London's Russell Square Turkish baths.

Also at home on the legitimate stage, in 1955 he toured in 'Anniversary Waltz' with Barbara Kelly and Bernard Braden, and it was straight acting on TV, the stage and films, including 'Carry on Cowboy' and 'The Mouse that Roared', that began to take up most of his time from here on. Reports say he died in June 1976 but I've been unable to find any details.

#### Larry Cross Recordings

##### PARLOPHONE

- F 2464 Jun 51 (with Geraldo orch) 'Across the wide Missouri'
- (next four discs with Roberto Inglez Orch)
- R 3400 Jun 51 'Castles in the sand / At the close of a long long day'
- R 3411 Jly 51 'My truly truly fair (with Song Pedlars) /
- London by night'
- R 3420 Aug 51 'Sweet violets (with Song Pedlars) / A place in the sun'
- R 3433 Sep 51 'Too young / Because of you'
- R 3443 Oct 51 'The morning side of the mountain / Don't dream of wedding bells'
- R 3459 Nov 51 'And so to sleep again / It's me again'
- R 3465 Dec 51 'My love and devotion / Hangin' around with you'
- R 3480 Jan 52 'It's all over but the memories / I want you'
- R 3504 Mar 52 'The glory of love / Painting the clouds with sunshine'
- R 3528 May 52 'Where I may live with my love / I'll walk alone'
- R 3562 Aug 52 'Only fascination / The mask is off'
- R 3585 Oct 52 'Half as much / You belong to me'

##### PHILIPS

- PB 262 Apl 54 (with Geraldo's orch & The Top Hatters)

'Look out the

window'

EMBASSY

- WB 101 Nov 54 'Three coins in the fountain / If I could write a song'
- WB 102 Dec 54 'Hold my hand / Guiding star'
- WB 113 Dec 54 'Count your blessings instead of sheep / C'est magnifique'
- WB 128 May 55 'Give me your word / I went to my mother'
- WB 137 Jly 55 'Earth angel / Engagement waltz'
- WB 160 Dec 55 'Ballad of Davy Crockett (with The Canadians) / Sixteen tons' (acc by Johnny Gregory orch)
- WB 178 Mar 56 'Chain gang / Are you satisfied'
- WB 183 May 56 'Too young to go steady / Nothin' to do'
- WB 208 Oct 56 'Mountain greenery / Ten thousand miles' (acc by Malcolm Lockyer orch)
- WB 211 Nov 56 'In the middle of the house / The legend of Wyatt Earp'
- WB 232 Mar 57 'The man who plays the mandolino / If wishes were horses' (acc by Ken Jones orch)
- WB 243 Jun 57 'Westward ho the wagons / Wringle wrangle'

## Ken CROSSLEY

Midlander Ken joined Billy Merrin's Commanders as guitarist-vocalist in 1934. From here he progressed to the bands of Oscar Grasso, Billy Thorburn, Mantovani and Henry Hall.

War service with the Royal Corps of Signals in Singapore led to his capture by the Japanese and he suffered gruelling treatment as a prisoner-of-war.

Back in circulation during 1946, he broadcast regularly with Nat Allen's Band through to the early fifties and appeared with them on television. In 1947 he joined Wally Chapman's Band, resident at the Dorchester Hotel.

When not on air or bandstand he could be found behind the counter of a record shop he owned in Chapel Street, off London's Edgware Road, that became a small chain under the collective name of Maddison's Music.

Ken's only recordings appear to be his pre-war sides with the bands of Merrin, Thorburn and Mantovani. He died on 2nd May 1987.

## Barry CRYER

Yet to become the well known humorist writer and broadcaster, Barry made a brief entry into the pop music market place in the late 1950's.

First coming to public notice when he appeared in the 1956 students rag show at Leeds City of Varieties Theatre (the same start Frankie Vaughan had made several years earlier), this led to several bookings for his stand up comedy act and an appearance on the ITV 'Bid For Fame' show.



Deciding to try for a show business career Barry became dresser to comedy magician David Nixon, where at close quarters he learned much of the art of the variety performer. It was David who eventually persuaded him to try his luck in London. Barry auditioned at Soho's Windmill Theatre and was engaged, appearing the same day. After about six months at the Windmill he was given a sizeable part in the stage version of the play about the music business 'Expresso Bongo', that opened at London's Saville Theatre in April 1958.

Although in the play his was a non singing part, it was about this time that it was suggested to Barry that with his distinctive voice he should take a recording test. The result, became in June the issue on Fontana of his cover of Sheb Wooley's US No.1 comedy hit song 'Purple people eater'. Barry's disc also went to No.1 ... in Finland! He followed this in September with a comedy beat number 'Nothin' shakin'.

During 1959 Barry did a cabaret season at the Cafe de Paris, another appearance on 'Bid For Fame' and began his first variety tour at Sheffield Empire from 2nd March. This led to a summer season at Blackpool Hippodrome doing a song and gag routine in a show that included the 'Army Game' TV series cast.

He played a boxer's second in Frankie Vaughan's film 'The Heart of a Man' and was in the film version of 'The Navy Lark'.

Barry's third, and apparently last, record in January 1959 was a departure from his previous comedy numbers, being a real ballad 'Angelina'. He went on to concentrate on comedy, joining John Junkin and Tim Brooke-Taylor on radio's 'Hello Cheeky' and hosted TV's 'Jokers Wild', building up a reputation as a quick thinking 'gag' man, still very much in demand today. Since 1972 he has been a member of the team on radio's long running comedy panel game 'I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue'.

In September 1999, forty years after he first appeared there, Barry returned to the West End stage playing W. C. Fields in the comedy musical 'A Saint She Ain't' written by Dick Vosburgh and Denis King.

During 2005 he went on the road in his 'First Farewell Tour'.

Barry Cryer Recordings

FONTANA

H 139 Jun 58 'The purple people eater / Hey Eula'  
H 152 Sep 58 'Nothin' shakin' / Seven daughters'  
H 177 Jan 59 'Angelina / Kissin'

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## Dagenham Girl Pipers

They were without doubt, a most unusual musical offering. However, during the forties and fifties the Dagenham Girl Pipers were a phenomenal success playing all around the world and were still going strong into the Eighties, in fact they still are.

Originally formed in 1930 as a Dagenham girls' Sunday School band by the Rev. Joseph Waddington Graves, they made their first public appearance in 1932 and broadcast a year later. Their first tutor was Pipe Major G. Douglas Taylor of the Kings Own Scottish Borderers, although he did it in secret for fear it would open him to ridicule.

Usually there were about 60 members, each needing about three years training before joining the band around the age of 14. Over the years, looking resplendent in their tartan uniform and with strict military precision, the corps of drums and bagpipes performed in night on 50 different countries. On the bands 1937 German tour Adolph Hitler attended one of their concerts. Such was the demand that often more than one unit was on tour.

Joseph Graves who had a very "distant" but domineering personality gave up running the Pipers in 1948 and show business promoter David Land took over. The girls with the best legs were always chosen even in Graves day - when a girl joined one of the first things he asked was "show me your legs" - but now the glamour of the outfit was probably further exploited. Although at all times the girls were closely guarded and chaperoned.

Tours included Las Vegas night clubs and at home they appeared in variety, pantomime, played summer seasons, two Royal Command Performances and were in the 1955 film 'Who Done It'. Television never took well to the Pipers, they were too big a spectacle for the basic service of the time.

Now all the heady days of fame have become just a memory for those lucky enough to have seen the Pipers in their prime, but they still exist. Under the leadership of Pipe Major Sheila Hatcher a new generation of girls still practice weekly, although now they usually only appear at shows around the south-east of England.

## Bob DALE

Bob, vocalist with the Cyril Stapleton Orchestra over a few years of the late forties and early fifties, had previously sung with the bands of Oscar Rabin and Billy Thorburn.

A handsome baritone, Bob, whose real name was Walter Winn, was born at Grimsby in 1921 and began singing professionally with the Bob Walker Band at the local Gaiety Ballroom when he was 16. A few years later, doing war work at a factory in Coventry, he was contacted by bandleader Billy Thorburn, who had noted his talent on an earlier visit to Grimsby, and offered the job of vocalist with his band. Bob spent almost a year touring in variety with Billy and made a number of records with the band, all under the name Wally Windsor.

In 1941 he joined Oscar Rabin's Band and changed his name to Bob Dale, staying with Oscar until being called up for service with the Royal Artillery during April 1942. Bob later transferred to the Navy and re-joined the Rabin Band after his discharge in 1946.

An offer to replace Dick James in the popular Cyril Stapleton Orchestra was something he couldn't refuse and so from early 1949 he moved

over, working alongside fellow singer Jean Campbell.

By 1951, tired of constant touring, Bob left Cyril and spent time playing cabaret in West End clubs, plus guest appearances with many top bands. Finding this freelancing professionally rewarding but financially precarious he opted to return to a regular wage packet, joining Geraldo's Orchestra, staying with Gerry for about two years. By the mid-fifties Bob was again going solo, touring in variety.

Making the odd appearance on several different labels during the fifties, Bob's biggest contribution to the recording industry of that decade was covering hits on Woolworth's Embassy label.

During the later fifties, with big bands and variety on the slide Bob performed less, but also worked as a song plugger for E.M.I. By the sixties he had left the business altogether, taking an office job.

With retirement in the mid-eighties Bob and his wife Phyllis (who he had married in September 1948 while he was with Oscar Rabin) settled in a bungalow near Thetford, Norfolk. A report in 2007 informed us that Bob was still around but in poor health and he died early 2008.

#### Bob Dale Recordings

PARLOPHONE *(as Wally Windsor with Billy Thorburn's Organ, Dance Band & Me)*

F 1822 Mar 41 'The echo of a serenade'  
F 1831 Apl 41 'It's always you'  
F 1838 Apl 41 'Let's be buddies'  
F 1843 May 41 'When they sound the last all clear /  
There's a tumbledown  
house'  
F 1844 May 41 'I crossed the gipsy's hand with silver'

REX *(with Oscar Rabin Band)*

10005 Jun 41 'There goes that song again'  
10006 Jun 41 'I understand'  
10017 Aug 41 'Beneath the lights of home'  
10053 Sep 41 'Waiting for Sally'  
10054 Sep 41 'My sister and I'  
10059 Oct 41 'Starlight serenade'  
10090 Dec 41 'When night is thru'  
10098 Dec 41 'Time was'  
10111 Feb 42 'Two in love *(with Diane)* / When it's  
peace  
on earth  
again'

DECCA *(with Oscar Rabin Band)*

F 8116 Apl 42 'Russian lullaby'

PARLOPHONE *(with Oscar Rabin Band)*

F 2246 Oct 47 'A garden in the rain *(with The Song Pedlars)*'  
F 2248 Nov 47 'How are things in Glocca Morra /  
I'm  
not in love'  
F 2260 Dec 47 'I wonder who's kissing her now'  
F 2280 Mar 48 'The flower seller'  
F 2297 Jun 48 'Oh! my achin' heart / Lonesome  
lane'  
F 2302 Jly 48 'Down by the old mill stream /  
My girls an  
Irish girl'

F 2304 Aug 48 'You can't be true dear'  
F 2344 Mar 49 'I'd give the world to you sweetheart'  
F 2348 Apl 49 'You're the only girl in the world /  
Far

away places'

DECCA *(with Cyril Stapleton Orch)*

F 9286 Nov 49 'A shawl of Galway grey / *(with Jean Campbell)* The hop

scotch polka'

F 9330 Jan 50 'I'll string along with you /  
Dear hearts and

gentle people'

F 9335 Feb 50 'You're my thrill / My street' *(acc by Bruce*

*Campbell Orch)*

F 9482 Aug 50 'I only have eyes for you /  
Lullaby of

the leaves'

F 9576 Dec 50 'All my love'

F 9581 Dec 50 'Beloved, be faithful'

F 9615 Feb 51 'Be my love'

ESQUIRE *(with George Harris orch)*

5-020 May 51 'Jealous / Try a little tenderness'

5-025 Jly 51 'Down by the river *(with The Haristocrats)*'

EMBASSY

WB 106 Nov 54 'The story of Tina / Wanted'

WB 121 Feb 55 'The finger of suspicion /  
Happy days and

lonely nights'

WB 150 Sep 55 'The yellow rose of Texas / The man  
from

Laramie' *(acc by Johnny*

*Gregory orch)*

WB 159 Dec 55 *(with Four-in-a-Chord)* 'White  
Christmas'

WB 165 Jan 56 *(with Rita Williams)* 'Love and  
marriage /

Relax-ay-voo' *(acc by Ken*

*Jones orch)*

WB 171 Feb 56 'Robin Hood / 'Happy trails *(with Rita Williams)*' *(acc by Primo Scala*

*Accordions)*

WB 263 Nov 57 'Mary's boy child / A night to  
remember' *(acc*

*by Johnny*

*Gregory orch)*

WB 267 Dec 57 'Kisses sweeter than wine / April  
love' *(acc*

*by Johnny*

*Gregory orch)*

ORIOLE

CB 1421 Feb 58 'The gift of love / One blade of grass'  
*(acc by*

*Johnny*

*Gregory orch)*

## Jim DALE

Born James Smith on 15th August 1935 at Rothwell, Northampton, he took tap dancing lessons as a ten year old and not long after leaving school auditioned for Carroll Levis as an acrobatic dancer.

Jim joined the Levis show touring in variety, staying about two years. Encouraged by Carroll, he began to introduce comedy and impressions into his act and also taught himself to play guitar. Slowly the acrobatics gave way to a comedy and song routine.

Touring in show-business came to a temporary halt when H.M. Government called Jim up for National Service and he spent two years in the R.A.F. On demob in 1955 he was soon heading back to the bright lights, and, signed up by the Jack Hylton Agency, made his television debut on an early ITV show 'Youth Takes a Bow' in January 1956.

When the BBC introduced its teenage music series 'Six Five Special' on television in 1957, Jim was signed on as a "warm up" act. His job was to get the audience in a good mood before the show really began. He obviously did a good job, for when regular presenters Jo Douglas and Pete Murray left, Jim was promoted to front the proceedings. As well as introducing the acts he joined in with his version of the latest hits. By the end of the year the BBC had cast him in the leading role of a television play with music 'Celery Quarter Blues', in which he played a greengrocer's boy who becomes a star overnight. Jim also did a lot of touring in variety.

Parlophone Records had already signed him and theatrical agents were now booking him as a pop singer, rather than a comedian. Jim's first disc 'Piccadilly Line' in July 1957, an obvious parody of the enormously popular 'Rock Island Line', did well but it was his second 'Be my girl' that really hit the mark, taking him to No.2 on the charts in November 1957. Three more records came during 1958 and, although nowhere near as big, did at least make it into the top thirty. They were 'Just born' that with 'Crazy dream' was a double sided hit, and 'Sugartime', a U.S. number one for The McGuire Sisters that also did well here for Alma Cogan..

After the heights of 'Six Five Special' Jim seemed to disappear from view. In fact he still did a lot of television, but mainly from the regional Southern I.T.V company. During 1959 he was compere, singer and comic on their three-times-a-week show 'Take It Easy', which also featured Janie Marden and The Malcolm Mitchell Trio. Asked why he turned his back on rock 'n' roll he replied "I've always wanted to be an all round performer and this means more than money to me. Here at S.T.V. I'm given the opportunity to develop all my talents".

During the years of change from dancer to singer and beyond Jim had always maintained he was happiest with comedy. Tall, slim, fair haired and with a cheeky face he was a natural for the big screen and it was through this medium he was able to indulge his enjoyment of playing the fool. In the early sixties he joined the team of the 'Carry On' films and appeared in several. Other movies included 'The National Health' and 'Lock up your Daughters'. In 1964 he appeared in the stage musical 'The Wayward Way' at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith and in 1973 'The Card' at the Queen's Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue. He was compere of T.V's 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' when it was revived after a six year absence, in 1973.

In 1974, as a member of the National Theatre, he toured America playing Shakespeare and decided to settle in that country, continuing to appear there on stage and film. For a year in the early eighties he put all his many talents to good use playing the lead in the stage musical about

circus life, 'Barnum'. Films included several for the Disney studio including 'Pete's Dragon'.

In 1992 he was back in Britain making a new Carry On film 'Carry on Columbus', but sadly with many of the original team having passed away, it was not a great success. During the late nineties sixty year old Jim was back on the London stage, playing the role of Fagin in a new production of the musical 'Oliver' at the Palladium theatre, but his main home with wife Julie was still in New York.

Come the 21st century and Jim Dale is still much in demand, not least for his narration on tape of the enormously popular 'Harry Potter' children's stories. Over 100 million of the books have been sold and in America almost as many tapes are bought as the print version. He rates an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records, for taking the top six places in the TopTen Best Selling Audio Book category. In 2004 he was awarded an MBE for his contribution to childrens literature. Jim has also recently appeared on the Broadway stage in a production of Kurt Weill's musical 'The Threepenny Opera'.

#### Jim Dale Recordings

##### PARLOPHONE

R 4329 Jly 57 'Piccadilly Line / I didn't mean it'  
R 4343 Sep 57 'Be my girl / You shouldn't do that'  
(acc

by Ron

Goodwin orch)

R 4356 Oct 57 (with the King Bros & Vipers Skiffle group)

'Top ten

special medley'

R 4376 Dec 57 'Crazy dream / Just born' (acc by Ken

Jones orch)

R 4402 Feb 58 'Sugartime / Don't let go' (acc by KJO)

R 4424 May 58 'Tread softly stranger / Jane Belinda' (acc

by Ken

Jones orch)

R 4522 Jan 59 'Gotta find a girl / The legend of Nellie D.'

(acc by Ken

Jones orch)

##### PICCADILLY

7N35039 Apl 62 'One boy, one girl / My resistance is low'

7N35100 Jan 63 'Start all over again / It's for them'

##### COLUMBIA

DB 7449 Jan 65 'Forget tomorrow / Is it O.K.?'  
DB 7746 65 'My carousel / Short time to go'

DB 7831 Feb 66 'This is me / What colour are you'

##### PYE

7N17751 69 'Miss Linda Grey / Of my life'

##### UNITED ARTISTS

UP 35483 73 'It's gonna be a good good war /

Milligan's blues'  
ACADEMY

AD 1 81 'Somewhere there's someone / If you

come back'

## The DALLAS BOYS

Five lads from Leicester, Bob Wragg, Leon Fisk, Gordon Webber, Tony Day and Stan Jones, formed a vocal quintet singing part time around local clubs. In 1955 they entered a talent competition at Butlin's Filey Holiday Camp, winning their heat. They went on to take third place in the national final and as a result were offered the summer season 1956 in a holiday show at Redcar. Previously the Dellac Brothers (the story goes that in the early days as an unnamed amateur group, someone once asked what they were "called", so they reversed the word and became the Dellac brothers! - unlikely but possible) but when they turned professional people thought Dellac sounded like gloss paint so they adopted the name The Dallas Boys. Londoner Nicky Clark and Jerry Angelo soon replaced Webber and Day, and a year later Angelo gave way to Joe Smith.

A Moss Empire variety tour in the revue 'Excitement' with comedian Ted Lune, plus appearances on the BBC Petula Clark TV shows helped to put them on the map. Part of the team of ITV's 'Oh Boy' teenage pop music series, they became familiar faces on television over many years. A big hit with the ladies, by 1958 their fan club included 5,000 of them.

Columbia Records spotted them and their first disc and one of their best 'Shangri-la' came out October 1957. Others soon followed, including covers of the Frank Sinatra hit 'All the way' and the Four Preps 'Big Man'. Being neither a beat group nor barber shop but a bit of both The Dallas Boys collected no hit parade honours but were certainly good entertainment. Fifties music press writer Dick Tatham said of them "If they were American The Dallas Boys would be a world beating act, because they have the talent". This is well proven by the fact that, at the time of writing in the early nineties, they are still performing while many of their fifties contemporaries are long forgotten.

Dallas Boys Recordings

### COLUMBIA

DB 4005 Oct 57 'Shangri-la / By the fireside' (*acc by Geoff*)

*Love orch*

DB 4041 Nov 57 'All the way / I never had the blues'

DB 4102 Mar 58 'Sail along silvery moon / Twenty six miles'

(*acc by Geoff*)

*Love orch*

DB 4154 Jun 58 'Big man / Lonesome traveller'

DB 4231 Dec 58 'Fatty Patty / Do you wanna jump children'

(*acc by Harry*)

*Robinson orch*

DB 4244 Jan 59 'Gigi / The mocking bird' (*acc by GLO*)

DB 4313 Jun 59 'I'm aware / Morning papers'

DB 4380 Dec 59 'A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square /

Christmas away from home' (*acc*

*by*

*Ken*

*Jones orch*

DB 4445 May 60 'Ramona / Boston tea party'

DB 4599 Mar 61 'One finger, one thumb, keep moving / Nice to know

you care'

MAJOR MINOR

MM 534 67 'What do you know about losin' / He

won't love you'

MM 563 68 'I can't fool my heart / Night of love'

CHARNWOOD

CWS 101 83 (12 inch 45rpm single) 'Medley of fifties hits /

Everything in

my world'

## Toni DALLI

Being a good looking Italian tenor he was certain to be noticed, and he was, quite successfully, during the latter fifties when Toni cast his charm over London's clubland. Playing cabaret at West End clubs was just a stepping stone to bookings across the Atlantic where he appeared on Ed Sullivan's T.V show during February 1958, followed by six weeks in cabaret at Hollywood's Moulin Rouge Club. Back in Britain he was soon touring in variety, making his London debut at Finsbury Park Empire in the week of Monday 17th November 1958, when 24 year old Toni is reported to have received "thunderous applause".

Columbia Records had spotted him early on and his first disc 'Just say I love her' came out while he was in the States. His second 'The man who plays the mandolino' had been a minor hit for Dean Martin a year earlier and his third 'More than ever' was a number two, in its original form as 'Come prima', for fellow Italian Marino Marini. With English words as 'More than ever' there were several discs issued, with both Malcolm Vaughan and Robert Earl taking it into the charts. Another version, mainly heard in the U.S., was titled 'For the first time' and had words from The Platters mentor Buck Ram. With this recording, as with all his others, while enjoying moderate success Toni never did quite make the big time.

As well as appearing on the variety circuit he also became a familiar face on the T.V screen, appearing on the usual pop shows like 'Cool For Cats' and the 'Jack Jackson Show' plus others like 'Startime' (on his 25th birthday, Thursday 27th November 1958) and 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' in February 1959. February also found him playing two weeks at the Palace Theatre in London's Shaftesbury Avenue as one of the support acts to Connie Francis.

On Saturday 24th October 1959 Toni sang 'Ave Maria' at a memorial service held for Mario Lanza in St. Peter's Italian Church in Clerkenwell. A year later, at the same church, he married dancer Valerie Chambers. The fifties ended with his pantomime debut in 'Dick Whittington' at Sheffield's Lyceum Theatre with Janet Brown and Don Arrol.

During the sixties Toni was just as likely to be performing on the continent as in Britain and is reported to have made several films there. Include tours of South Africa and North America and it's obvious he was now something of a globe-trotter. Eventually he gave up all the travelling, returned to Italy and then opened the

'Oasis Club' restaurant in Marbella Spain, which he still runs with his family - he has three sons - today.

Toni Dalli Recordings  
COLUMBIA

DB 4096 Mar 58 'Just say I love her / If you loved me'  
(acc by

Tony

Osborne orch)

DB 4173 Aug 58 'The man who plays the mandolino /

Catari, catari'

DB 4195 Sep 58 'More than ever (acc by Geoff Love  
orch) /

Santa Lucia (acc by Tony

Osborne orch)

DB 4220 Nov 58 'I'll walk with God / You are my  
hearts delight'

(acc by Michael Collins orch

& chorus)

DB 4251 Jan 59 'The gypsies / Monte Carlo'

DB 4274 Mar 59 'The world keeps turning / Io sono il  
vento'

DB 4303 May 59 'Luna rossa / It's beautiful'

DB 4376 Nov 59 'Magdalena / Each little hour'

DB 4459 Feb 60 'Be not afraid / Bella citta roma'

DECCA

F 11952 Aug 64 'Who can I turn to / One by one the  
roses died'

## Joe DANIELS

Joe, born Zeerust, South Africa on 9th March 1909, was just two when his father died. Shortly after this his mother brought Joe and his two brothers to England. All three brothers ended up in show business, Len was a musician who later ran a music shop in Soho and Syd became Sirdani the stage magician with the catch-phrase "Don't be fright".

While growing up in London Joe showed an interest in drums and by the age of fourteen had a full kit, bought piece by piece for him by his elder brothers. While still at school he played evenings with a band at a local restaurant where the bandleader was a bit of a clown who turned cartwheels and forever jumped about. It was while providing the "sound effects" for these antics that Joe began to develop his dynamic showy style. It wasn't long before he was playing professionally in variety with Harry and Burton Lester's Cowboy band. After that he spent a year sailing back and forth across the Atlantic as a member of the band on board the liner 'Majestic'. Back on dry land he toured for a while in revue and played with West End club bands. For a six month season he led his own group at the Ice Palace in Madrid, Spain. There were also spells at the Glasgow Palais de Danse and Belfast Plaza.

By 1930 he was with Billy Mason's Band at London's Cafe de Paris but the following year made probably the most significant move of his career joining Harry Roy's R.K.Olians at the Leicester Square Theatre. During his six years with Harry he formed a jazz group within the band that by the mid-thirties was recording on Parlophone as Joe Daniels and his Hot Shots, their first disc being 'St.Louis blues' coupled with 'Sweet Sue'.

In January 1937 he left Harry to go on tour

with the Hot Shots, but in 1939 war service intervened and he spent the next six years with the R.A.F, where he continued to lead a quintet and still managed to record the occasional disc.

Following his demob the Hot Shots were re-formed with the accent now on the popular Dixieland style. Singer-dancer with the band was Joe's wife of over ten years Mary Nolan. She was supported by Eve Cliff. The lads, looking extremely smart in wine coloured jerseys and white flannels, toured extensively, including several visits to service camps overseas. There were also times when Joe disbanded to do a solo drumming act around the variety halls.

By the early fifties, experimenting with different styles, Joe dropped the Hot Shots title and for the summer of 1951 formed a new Dixieland group that appeared in the presence of Princess Elizabeth at the National Federation of Jazz Organisations concert at Royal Festival Hall on 14th July. One commentator noted "this is a real jazz band". But the following year Joe almost gave up jazz altogether, taking a dance band with vocalists Mike Stevens and Barbara Young to Butlin's Ayr Holiday Camp for the season. The same year he had become a partner in a business that turned Slough Theatre into Slough Palais de Dance. While often appearing there with his own boys he installed as resident group the Harry Conway All Stars, "the band with the beat for dancers".

Summer seasons for Butlin's became a regular thing for Joe during the fifties, taking him to camps at Filey, Skegness and Clacton. His billing read "not the biggest band, not the loudest band, but the danciest band". When summer was over Joe returned to his first love and toured with a jazz group around the clubs.

During much of the sixties Joe virtually gave up touring having taken on a Wimpy Bar franchise in London's Piccadilly. Slough Palais had been sold to the proprietor of Wembley Majestic Ballroom in 1955. Joe did continue with his Butlin seasons, something that lasted over twenty years, and in 1969 he gave up the burger bar and went back on the road. He was still occasionally playing right through the eighties.

Joe died on 1st July 1993 aged 85, never the world's greatest drummer but a true showman and certainly one of the most entertaining. He was cremated at Golders Green cemetery, a service attended by many musician friends and his widow Mary.

Joe Daniels Recordings

PARLOPHONE (with his Hot Shots in  
Drumnastics)

F 211 Jul 35 'Sweet Sue / St. Louis blues'

F 322 Nov 35 'Chinatown my Chinatown / In the  
shade of

the

old apple tree'

F 405 Feb 36 'Dinah / I ain't got nobody'

F 551 Jul 36 'Drummer goes to town (v.JD) / The  
Japanese

Sandman'

F 576 Jul 36 'Beale Street blues / Cuban Pete'

F 629 Jul 36 'I got rhythm / After you've gone'

F 656 Oct 36 'I can't give you anything but love /  
Alexander's

ragtime band'				La Zonga			
F 706	Oct 36	'Valparaiso / The peanut vendor'		(v.Eddie Lee)'			
F 741	Oct 36	'Loveless love / Who'		F 1776	Aug 40	'Crazy blues / Steppin' out to swing'	
F 760	Mar 37	'Basin Street blues / It don't mean a thing		F 1785	Sep 40	'Baton rouge blues (two parts)'	
		if it ain't		F 1793	Sep 40	'Spitfire / Daniels in the lion's den'	
				F 1805	Jan 41	'Beat me daddy eight to the bar / Missouri	
got that swing'				scrambler'			
F 789	May	37	'Swing high swing low / Big boy blue'	F 1807	Jan 41	'Southern fried / Epe Ipe wanna piece of pie'	
F 817	May	37	'Mama Inez / Wabash blues'	F 1815	Jan 41	'Pennsylvania 6-5000 / Jammin' session'	
F 844	Jul 37	'Twelfth Street rag / The sheik of Araby'		F 1823	Jan 41	'Abbey Road hop / Whirlwind'	
F 860	Jul 37	'Nobody's sweetheart / Moon glow'		F 1829	Mar 41	'Benin River blues / Juke box jive'	
F 889	Jul 37	'Chicken reel / Runnin' wild'		F 1862	Mar 41	'Drum boogie / St. Charles Avenue strutt'	
F 924	Jul 37	'China boy / Farewell blues'					
F 933	Oct 37	'It looks like rain in Cherry Blossom Lane		F 1865	Jan 41	'Pickled onions / Red light'	
		(v.chorus) /		F 1875	Sep 41	'Smoke rings / A man and his drum'	
Home town'				F 1882	Sep 41	'Red robin rag / Bogieman blues'	
F 951	Sep 37	'Avalon / Ain't misbehavin'		F 1891	Sep 41	'Fats in the fire / Dancin' for a dime'	
F 991	Sep 37	'For me and my gal / Swing swing		F 1909	Mar 42	'Lady be good / When you're smiling'	
swing'				F 1915	Mar 42	'Time on my hands / Down beat'	
F 1020	Jan 38	'Swing Big Ben / Cuban swing'		F 1939	Mar 42	'Swing fan / Honeysuckle rose'	
F 1045	Jan 38	'Alabamy bound / Powerhouse'		F 1945	Mar 42	'My melancholy baby / Corn on the cob'	
F 1077	Mar 38	'Bugle call rag / Stardust'					
F 1099	Mar 38	'Somebody stole my gal / Tea for two'		F 1951	Aug 42	'Pig in a poke / Rubber ball rhythm'	
F 1122	May	38	'Knees up Mother Brown / The oldest swinger	F 1956	Oct 42	'Jazz me blues / Jazz jamboree'	
in Harlem'				F 1961	Oct 42	'Rose petals / Swing is the thing'	
F 1148	May	38	'Arkansas blues / Tiger rag'	F 1994	Oct 42	'Snug as a bug / Canzonetta'	
F 1169	Jun 38	'Drummer man from Dixie / Ultra modern		F 2009	Apl 44	'Cow cow boogie / My blue heaven'	
swing'				F 2019	44	'Bugle boy blues / Drum kit'	
F 1187	Jun 38	'Antigua / Barbary Coast blues'		F 2045	Dec 44	'Blues in boogie / Don` t be that way'	
F 1214	Aug 38	'Whispering / Limehouse blues'		F 2058	Feb 45	'Sippy serenade / Tight as a drum'	
F 1243	Aug 38	'All the nice girls love a sailor / Cockles and		F 2066	Apl 45	'Bel mir bist du schoen / If I had you'	
mussels'				F 2075	Jun 45	'Drummer boy drum (two parts)'	
F 1273	Oct 38	'Goodbye blues / Some of these days'		F 2084	Aug 45	'Clarinet marmalade / King for a day'	
F 1313	Oct 38	'Harlem swing / Swamp fire'		F 2091	Oct 45	'Talk of the town / Nice going'	
F 1342	Dec 38	'Solitude / Blue rhythm of the blues'		F 2098	Nov 45	'Ciribiribin / In Pinetop`s footsteps'	
F 1364	Dec 38	'It's an old Cuban custom / Swing syncopation		F 2116	Jan 46	'Back bay shuffle / Boogie boots'	
with a fork and				F 2142	May	46 'Short`nin` bread / I`m forever blowing	
spoon (v.JD)'				bubbles'			
F 1385	Mar 39	'Mutiny in the nursery (v.JD) / Tutti frutti'		F 2157	Jly 46	'Alexander`s ragtime band / Shreveport	
F 1419	Mar 39	'Music Hall rag / Temple block swing'		shuffle'			
F 1445	May	39	'Beatin' on the washboard / Crashin' through'	F 2167	Sep 46	'Blues for you / Diga diga doo'	
F 1468	May	39	'Mood indigo / Narcissus'	F 2184	Nov 46	'Barrel house boogie / Blue skies'	
F 1488	Jun 39	'Corn pickin' / Begin the beguine'		F 2199	Jan 47	'Sweet Lorraine / Bounce'	
F 1514	Jun 39	'Dardanella / Canadian capers'		F 2210	Mar 47	'Way down yonder in New Orleans / In a little	
F 1558	Aug 39	'Nellie Dean / The man who broke the bank		Spanish town'			
at				F 2233	Aug 47	'Boogie band / Savannah stomp'	
Monte Carlo'				F 2247	Oct 47	'Blue ridge bounce / As you like it'	
F 1571	Aug 39	'Bull frog blues / Hurricane'		F 2251	Nov 47	'Broken hearted blues / Bienville Street blues'	
F 1637	Dec 39	'If you were the only girl in the world /		F 2268	Feb 48	'Drumnastics' (both sides)	
I				F 2288	May	48 'Hawaiian war chant / Muskat ramble'	
never knew'				F 2300	Jly 48	'One for the boys / Yes we have no bananas'	
F 1659	Feb 40	'War dance for wooden Indians / My wubba		F 2313	Oct 48	'My blue heaven / At the jazz band ball'	
dolly (v.JD)'				F 2324	Dec 48	'Lily of Laguna / Parade of the tin soldiers'	
F 1682	Dec 39	'Hot and anxious / Hotshots on parade'		F 2341	Mar	49	'Morning mood / Smooth as silk'
F 1701	Feb 40	'Manhattan maroomba / Busking around'		F 2351	May	49	'Dixieland ball / Satanic blues'
F 1721	Apl 40	'Good to me (v.Eddie Lee) / The darktown		F 2367	Jly 49	'Jazz band parade / Copenhagen'	
strutters ball'				F 2392	Dec 49	'Donnell blues / Gin mill blues'	
F 1748	Apl 40	'That`s a plenty / Ida (v.Eddie Lee)		F 2397	Feb 50	'Drummin' Dan / Sugarfoot stomp'	
F 1774	Aug 40	'No name jive / Six lessons from Madame		F 2413	Jun 50	'Old piano roll blues / Dixieland rag'	
				F 2426	Oct 50	'Shine / Chicago'	
				F 2438	Dec 50	'University rag / Memphis blues'	
				F 2452	Mar 51	'Who`s sorry now / Boogie for googie'	
				F 2458	May	51	(Jazz Group) 'At a Georgia camp meeting /
				Washington &			
				Lee swing'			
				F 2466	Jly 51	'Joint`s a jiving / The saints are here'	
				F 2473	Oct 51	'Slightly on the mellow side /	

eyes at me'

Ma he`s making

(following records with his Jazz Group)

R 3425 Sep 51 'Barnyard blues / Wolverine blues'  
R 3462 Dec 51 'Corrine corrina / Wang wang blues'  
R 3495 Apl 52 'Doctor Jazz / Five point blues'  
R 3527 May 52 'The Dixie band stomp / Weary blues'  
R 3565 Aug 52 'Can can boogie / That da da strain'  
R 3574 Oct 52 'The boogie woogie march / Runnin` wild'  
R 3608 Dec 52 'Riverboat shuffle / I got rhythm'  
R 3661 Apl 53 'Sobbin` blues / Honey babe'  
R 3695 Jun 53 'Happy boogie / Mama don`t allow it'  
R 3718 Aug 53 'Royal Garden blues / So black and blue'  
R 3771 Nov 53 'Nobody knows you when your down and out /

Jazz me

blues'

R 3801 Jan 54 'Jelly roll / The creepers creep'  
R 3854 May 54 'Spain / Bugle call rag'  
R 3888 Jly 54 'I wish I could shimmy like my sister Kate /

Susie'

R 3921 Oct 54 'Little brown jug / Mountain wine'  
R 3952 Dec 54 'The champagne touch / Crazy rhythm'  
R 4023 May 55 'Marie / Rosetta'  
R 4072 Oct 55 'St.Louis blues / Talking drums'  
R 4112 Dec 55 'Dixieland party' (two sides)  
R 4173 May 56 'The charleston / Chicago'  
R 4236 Nov 56 'Dixieland party No.2' (two sides)  
R 4273 Feb 57 (his big Dixie band) 'Spanish shaw / When the saints go

marching in'

R 4330 Jly 57 (band) 'Oi! Oi! Oi! / Bottle beatin` blues'  
R 4378 Nov 57 'Juke box jazz' (two sides)

## Maxine DANIELS

Maxine was born 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1930 in the east end London, with a local mother and a seafaring father who came originally from Barbados. Being one of a family of 13 children living in the tough run down Stepney dock area promised little future for young Gladys Lynch, as she was then. So wartime evacuation to Carmarthen in rural Wales must have seemed like heaven on earth to her and it was here that she began singing - everybody did.

Back in London she began work in a pickle bottling factory, but overcame this dreary day job by singing in the evenings with a local Canning Town dance band. She also got married. Entering talent contests she was a London area finalist in the Daily Sketch 1954 'Find a Zinger' contest, coming second in the national finals. This led to her first professional job, singing with The Denny Boyce Orchestra at Purley`s Orchid Ballroom. It was Denny who suggested she change her rather unglamorous name of Gladys, so she adopted the christian name of one of her favourite singers, Maxine Sullivan with Daniels being her married name.

It was regular Tuesday evening broadcasts on Radio Luxembourg`s 'Pick of the Pops' that introduced her to an even wider audience and in February 1956 she made her record debut, 'Our love affair', with Denny`s Orchestra on the Oriole label. During the remainder of the decade

Maxine made several more singles for Oriole, including two songs from the 1958 film 'Passionate Summer' starring Bill Travers and Virginia McKenna.

Early television appearances were with Denny Boyce, but more and more she was invited to appear as a solo artist on T.V. and radio. She appeared on 'Ship Canal Showboat', the first variety show transmitted from Manchester by the new North of England commercial service on Saturday 5th May 1956.

Deciding the time was right to launch out on a solo career she began a week of cabaret at the Astor Club in London`s Berkeley Square from 2nd July 1956, followed by more night club work, returning to Denny Boyce for a short summer season with the orchestra at the Jersey Plaza Ballroom.

Maxine`s first variety tour came with the show 'Disc Jamboree' alongside singers Marie Benson, David Hughes and pianist Joe Henderson. The tour kicked off at the Chiswick Empire on Monday 27th August 1956. This she followed by touring in another musical package with more of a rock and roll flavour. It was headed by drummer Tony Crombie with his Rockets and included singer Don Fox. Maxine was not a rock and roll singer and she later remembered how she`d "tried to sing a ballad to an audience who only came to hear rock". It was one of her most unpleasant experiences.

Continuing to be busy at home, Maxine was also in demand on the Continent and during 1957 did radio and T.V. dates in Holland and Germany. She certainly was never short of work. During the summer of 1957, after doing early evening concerts at U.S. service bases around London, she rushed back to town for late night cabaret at the Jack o` Clubs or Stork Room. During both September and December she did a whole week of appearances on the BBC TV 'Tonight' programme.

Maxine`s other idol was Ella Fitzgerald, "On stage I am Ella" she once said. Perhaps it was her feeling for jazz that endeared her to Humphrey Lyttelton, for during the late 1950`s she often appeared on stage and radio with Hump`s band.

A change of direction came with a 10 week season, leading up to Christmas 1958, when Maxine took one of the main parts in Sandy Wilson`s musical play 'Valmouth' at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, co-starring with Bertice Reading and Fenella Fielding. Unfortunately, due to a prior booking, she was unable to remain in her role when the play moved into the West End at the Saville Theatre. That prior commitment was at Southampton`s Gaumont Theatre in the winter holiday season 'Frankie Vaughan Show', joining other acts including The King Brothers, Jimmy Wheeler and Frank Weir`s Orchestra.

All this non-stop work (there was also her family, including young daughter Hazel to look after) finally caught up with Maxine and she was ordered by her doctor to take a rest. However, she was soon back on the road in a one night stand tour with Russ Conway and the John Barry Seven. There had been several more Oriole discs, but by the sixties Maxine had faded from the recording scene, her continuing health

problems also keeping her out of the public eye for quite a while. Maxine was really quite shy and never one to push herself. One story tells of how she applied for the job as a pub cleaner, and when a later conversation with the owner revelled her past, he insisted on getting her performing again. Following this she eventually bounced back and during the eighties appeared in jazz shows and recorded two albums on the Calligraph label.

Still an active singer come the 1990's, Maxine was on the road again doing a 'Fabulous Fifties' tour with Ronnie Hilton and Dennis Lotis. She then toured with Rosemary Squires, Barbara Jay and the Tommy Whittle Quartet in a musical tribute to Ella called 'The Ella Fitzgerald Songbook', which was also issued on CD. Maxine died aged 72 on the 20th October 2003. One of her younger brothers was the well known performer Kenny Lynch.

#### Maxine Daniels Recordings

ORIOLE (acc on most by Denny Boyce orch)

CB 1318 Feb 56 'Play me some music for crying /  
Our  
love affair'  
CB 1332 Jun 56 'The fountains of Rome /  
In the old French quarter of  
New Orleans'  
CB 1356 Mar 57 'All of me / Heartache for sale'  
CB 1366 Apr 57 'Coffee bar calypso / Cha cha calypso'  
CB 1372 May 57 'London is a village / Why should I  
care'  
CB 1402 Jan 58 'I never realised / Moonlight  
serenade'  
CB 1407 Feb 58 'A foggy day / The London I love'  
CB 1440 May 58 'Somebody else is taking my place /  
You brought a new kind of  
love to me'  
CB 1449 Jun 58 'When it's springtime in the rockies /  
My  
summer heart'  
CB 1462 Sep 58 'Passionate summer / Lola's heart'

## Johnny DANKWORTH

Among Britain's most inventive and talented jazz musicians, Johnny led one of our few commercially successful big bands. From Woodford, Essex, John, born on 20th September 1927, was educated at Sir George Monoux Grammar School. Both his mother and sister sang in choirs and as a youngster he played piano.

At school Johnny studied piano and violin and at the age of thirteen was given his first clarinet. He later completed a two year classical theory and practice course at the Royal Academy of Music, where he gained his L.R.A.M. with honours. For relaxation he played clarinet with semi-pro Freddy Mirfield and his Garbage Men around London clubs. His command of the instrument earned him top place in the Melody Maker 1944 readers' poll.

A career in the classics was postponed while Johnny did his National Service where he continued to extend his musical experience playing in army bands and working on arrangements. Discharged early on medical grounds he joined 'Gerald's Navy' as a member of the orchestra aboard the liner 'Queen Mary'

working the Atlantic crossing and when in New York he was able to hear first hand some of the great jazz musicians he had so long admired on record. Back in the U.K. he worked with several bands including Les Ayling at the Strand Lyceum, while many of the ideas he had picked up in the States were incorporated into arrangements he did for Ted Heath, Ambrose and other leaders.

With the be-bop style becoming almost as popular here as it was in the States, Johnny, now favouring tenor saxophone, joined with some of this country's foremost exponents in the Tito Burns Sextet. He also sat in with the Ambrose and Paul Fenoulhet Orchestras. In 1949 the Melody Maker voted him top alto sax player and musician of the year.

It was inevitable he would soon be leading his own outfit and the same year the Johnny Dankworth Quartet, comprising of Johnny on alto with Norman Stenfalt piano, Joe Muddel bass and Laurie Morgan drums made several recordings for Esquire. They appeared regularly on the popular Club Eleven concerts.

The famous Johnny Dankworth Seven made their debut public appearance at a Club 11 night on 10th December 1949, the line up comprising Johnny on alto-sax leading Don Rendell tnr, Mac Minshell trombone, Leon Calvert trumpet, Joe Muddle bass, Tommy Pollard piano and Tony Crombie drums.

The Seven's first big concert appearance was on one of Ted Heath's London Palladium Swing Sessions on Sunday 5th March 1950, their progressive new sound surprisingly only getting luke-warm reception. Their first broadcast was a 'Jazz Club' on 18th March. By now the Seven comprised Johnny leading Don Rendell tenor, Eddie Harvey trombone, Bill Le Sage piano, Joe Muddel bass, Tony Kinsey drums with Jimmy Deuchar on trumpet although he still had to complete his military service up till May. Their original vocalist was Marie Benson who soon gave way to Marion Williams. There were several personnel changes during the Seven's three year existence but it always manage to maintain its lead as the most modern group of the day.

In May Johnny opened his Modern Music Club in the premises of Mack's Restaurant at 100 Oxford Street, London, moving a couple of months later to the Studio Club in Great Newport Street. As well as appearing there the band began a tour of one night stands around the country. The Seven's debut records, again on Esquire, matched a jazz issue featuring the standard 'Cherokee', against a more commercial disc featuring 'Sam's song' with a vocal from Marion Williams.

In October 1950 Johnny signed two new vocalists, Frank Holder and Linda Ellington. Six months later Linda's place was taken by a young lady who in jazz circles was to become a match for the leader himself. Within months the Melody Maker was proclaiming Cleo Laine one of the greatest jazz finds ever. The Johnny Dankworth Seven were voted top small group in Melody Maker's 1951 poll.

While big on the jazz club and concert circuit, the Seven made few broadcasts. This was deliberate, for Johnny thought (as did many



others in the profession) that the BBC did the serious jazz musician no favours in its presentation of their music.

In the 1952 Melody Maker poll the Seven repeated their previous success while Johnny added top arranger to his alto crown. It was his great interest in arranging that finally persuaded him to abandon the highly popular Seven format at the height of their fame in favour of a big band. He felt a twenty piece outfit gave him more of an arranging challenge. One of the Seven's closing dates was their television debut, made on a 'Forces Show' from the Nuffield Centre on Wednesday 14th January 1953. They played their last concert at Leith on 11th July and the new big band debuted on 23rd October at Nottingham's Astoria ballroom. Then came two weeks at Green's Playhouse, Glasgow, where on the first week business was good but the second even better, a sure sign of success. The orchestra was not without its critics though and during the first few months some gentle honing took place.

The orchestra played its London debut on Sunday 15th November 1953 at the Royal Albert Hall with newcomer Tony Mansell joining Cleo and Frank on vocals. On December 4th they were on radio's 'BBC Ballroom' and the same month began recording on the Parlophone label. During 1954 they accompanied Nat King Cole on his short U.K. tour. Less than a year after formation they were voted second favourite big band in the country to Ted Heath, while Johnny once again retained his solo alto position.

Among their numerous recordings of the period, one, 'Experiments with mice', stands out as an all time classic. A novelty, Johnny had scored the nursery rhyme Three Blind Mice in the style of several top American bands of the day. It made our Top Ten list during June 1956 and also charted in the States. A similar offering 'Big Jazz Story' a year later didn't do so well. Johnny's only other record chart entry was 'African waltz' in 1961.

By mid-1957 both Frank and Tony had gone, leaving Cleo as sole vocalist and every effort was made to showcase her as the great jazz singer she was. As the fifties came to a close the orchestra was regularly voted top British big band, with Cleo easily topping the female band singer polls. On Tuesday 18th March 1958 Johnny and Cleo were married in a secret ceremony at Hampstead Register Office. During 1959 the pianist for a while with the orchestra was a name to become much more widely known over the years, Dudley Moore.

During the sixties Johnny did less touring, concentrating on arranging, studio work and promoting his wife's career. He wrote the score of several films and in later years with Cleo set up a jazz workshop, encouraging newcomers to the music business, in converted stables at their home in Buckinghamshire. In 1974 Johnny was awarded the C.B.E for his services to music.

Johnny Dankworth Recordings

ESQUIRE

*Johnny Dankworth Quartet*

10-037 Jan 50 'Bremavin / Lover man' (recorded Apl 49)

12-007 Jan 50 'Second eleven / Body and soul' (12 inch)

(recorded

Apl 49)

12-011 Feb 51 'Night in Tunisia / Ronnie Scott quartet

(12 inch

recorded Apl 49)

10-115 Mar 51 (Johnny directs the Melody Maker All Stars)

'Brand's essence /

Marshall's plan'

*Johnny Dankworth Seven*

10-093 Oct 50 'Cherokee / Seven not out'

5-005 Oct 50 'Theme from haunted ballroom / Sam's song

(v. Marion

Williams')

5-010 Feb 51 'Lament and wild dance / Don't blame me

(v.

Frank Holder')

10-103 Mar 51 'Get happy / Perhaps'

5-023 May 51 'So in love / Blue moon (both v. Alan Dean)

5-030 Jly 51 'Stardust / Marching through Georgia'

10-163 Nov 51 'I hear music / The slider'

10-173 Nov 51 'Leon Bismark / Webb city'

5-052 Dec 51 'Mr. and Mississippi / Lush life'

(both v.

Cleo Laine)

10-193 Jan 52 'Strictly confidential / Allen's alley'

10-203 Feb 52 'Stomp in' at the Savoy / Myob'

5-056 Feb 52 'it's no sin (v. Cleo Laine) /

The wedding of the

painted doll'

5-060 Apl 52 'I've got you under my skin (v. Frank Holder) /

The very thought of you (v.

Cleo Laine)

10-223 Apl 52 'Our delight / Bopscotch'

5-063 Jun 52 (J.D. with strings) 'I never knew / memory

lane (both v. Kathran Field)

5-066 Jun 52 " 'Belle of the ball /

Someone to watch

over me'

JAZZ PARADE / VOGUE (on both labels with same number)

*Johnny Dankworth Seven*

B8 Sep 50 'Marmaduke / Lightly politely'

B9 Sep 50 'Strike up the band / Little Benny'

PARLOPHONE

*Johnny Dankworth Seven*

R 3660 Mar 53 'Swingin' / Honeysuckle rose (v. Cleo Laine)

R 3694 Jun 53 'Two ticks / Moon flowers'

R 3719 Aug 53 'I get a kick out of you (v. Frank Holder) /

Easy living (v.

Cleo Laine)

*Johnny Dankworth Orchestra*

R 3788 Dec 53 'Younger every day / 'S wonderful'

R 3820 Feb 54 'The slider / It's the talk of the town'

R 3836 Mar 54 'My buddy / The jerky thing'

R 3850 Apl 54 '(Seven) Oo-be-doop / (Orch)

Runnin' wild'

R 3871 Jun 54 'I know you're mine / I got rhythm' (both v.

Cleo Laine)

R 3886 Jly 54 'Perdido / Four of a kind'  
 R 3919 Oct 54 'Hold my hand / The high and the mighty'  
 (both v. Tony  
*Mansell*)  
 R 3928 Oct 54 'Mambo in the moonlight / Stop, proceed with  
 caution' (both v.  
*Frank Holder*)  
 R 3935 Nov 54 'You go to my head / Bugle call rag'

R 3964 Jan 55 'I got it bad and that ain't good / Ain't misbehavin'' (both v.  
*Cleo Laine*)  
 R 4033 May 55 'Cole storage / Get happy'  
 R 4107 Nov 55 'Feather merchant / Indiana'  
 R 4145 Mar 56 'Zambezi / 11th hour melody'  
 (both v. Tony  
*Mansell*)

R 4148 Mar 56 'Moby Dick / Memories of you'  
 R 4185 Jun 56 'Experiments with mice / Applecake'  
 R 4213 Oct 56 'Blues in the night / Adios'  
 R 4274 Feb 57 'All Clare / Melbourne marathon'  
 R 4294 Apr 57 'Duke's joke / Coquette'  
 R 4321 Jun 57 'Big Jazz story / Firth of forths'  
 R 4456 Jly 58 'The Colonel's tune / Jim and Andy's'

#### CAPITOL

CL 14285 May 55 'Singing in the rain / Non stop London'

#### TOP RANK

JAR 112 Apr 59 (with *Pinewood Studio orch*)  
 'Sapphire' (soloist on one  
 side only)  
 JAR 209 Oct 59 (& *his orch*) 'We are the Lambeth boys /

Duet for 16'  
 COLUMBIA

DB 4590 Feb 61 'African waltz / Moanin''  
 DB 4695 Sep 61 'Avengers theme / Chano'  
 DB 4751 Dec 61 'String of camels / Winter wail'  
 DB 4852 Jly 62 'Cannonball / S.O. blues'  
 DB 4943 Dec 62 'O pato / Abandonado'

#### FONTANA

TF 365 Feb 62 (from '*All Night Long*' film soundtrack)  
 'Muy rapido /  
 Skin fever'  
 TF 396 May 63 'Sing, sing, sing / Hoe down'  
 TF 422 Nov 63 'The Avengers / Off the cuff'  
 TF 512 Nov 64 'Down a tone / Beefeaters'  
 TF 643 Jan 66 'Sands of the Kalahari / Night thoughts'  
 TF 675 Feb 66 'Return from the ashes / Piano theme'  
 TF 700 May 66 'Modesty Blaise theme / The Frost Report'  
 TF 805 Mar 67 'Just like a woman / Accident'  
 TF 857 Aug 67 'Two piece flower / La clownesse'

#### PHILIPS

6006337 73 'Tomorrows World / Bitter lemon'

#### DECCA

F 13703 Apr 77 (with *Maurice Jarre orch*) 'The last tycoon /  
 Thought for  
 Laura'  
 BBC  
 RESL 63 79 'Telford's change / Serenade for

Sylvia'

SEPIA (conducting *London Symphony Orchestra*)

RSRS 1 86 'Further experiments with mice /  
 Decline and fall  
 of a bridge'

## Harry DAVIDSON

Harry cut his musical teeth as a pianist for silent films graduating to organist at Hammersmith's Commodore Theatre, where he later replaced Joseph Muscant as conductor of the Commodore orchestra.

As a leader of light orchestras Harry made hundreds of broadcasts and dozens of records. From December 1943 he became the idol of old time dancers with his radio series 'Those were the Days' that ran until 1974.

## Beryl DAVIS

Daughter of Oscar Rabin's long time partner Harry Davis, Beryl sang and recorded with several 1930's / 40's dance bands including Oscar Rabin, Philip Green, Geraldo and The Skyrockets and sang in Paris with The Hot Club of France. Her first recordings appear to have been with Rabin's Romany Band in 1936.

Born in Plymouth on 16th March 1924, with both her parents in show business she began touring with them while still an infant. After leaving school she toured the continent with the Quintette of the Hot Club of France, but the arrival of her 15th birthday in March 1939 meant she was now allowed to sing 'sophisticated' songs on the BBC and could join the Rabin-Davis Romany Band at Hammersmith Palais for broadcast work.

By her early teens Beryl was already in great demand as a singer and during the early forties was regularly heard on radio shows including 'Music from the Movies', 'Twelve Men and One Woman' where the twelve men were singer Benny Lee and the Club Royal Orchestra. In August 1944 Beryl sang 'It's love, love, love' with Glenn Miller's AAF Band on a BBC broadcast. She also had her own series 'Beryl By Candlelight', and had a starring role in Sid Field's 1946 film musical 'London Town' (pity about the dreadful lip-sync dubbing).

Not just a singer, she spent three years training as a dancer and won the all England tap-dancing championship twice. Beryl was also an excellent horsewoman and as a child won several prizes in that sport.

Having played many troop concerts and endeared herself to a lot of servicemen, including plenty of American G.I.'s, she joined many of them on their journey home. In January 1947 Beryl left these shores for the States where she had a contract for numerous film, radio and personal appearances. She guested with such famous bandleaders as Benny Goodman and Vaughan Monroe, featured on Bob Hope's radio show and for twenty-six consecutive weeks during 1948 was jointly billed with Frank Sinatra on the 'Hit Parade' programmes transmitted coast to coast from Hollywood.

In October 1948 she married 38 year old

Hollywood disc jockey Peter Potter (he originated the show that we knew here as 'Juke Box Jury') and settled into semi-retirement over there.

During the early fifties Beryl had a spot on her husband's weekly T.V show and was the singing voice of actress June Haver in the 1953 film 'The Girl Next Door'. She recorded two songs from the film and continued to record on the R.C.A, Coral and M.G.M labels.

In 1968 Beryl toured Britain's northern club circuit, partnering film sex symbol (fifties style) Jane Russell, in an act described as "glamorous, colourful and worthy of any Las Vegas night club". Beryl and Jane along with Rhonda Fleming and Connie Haines made several records under the name The Four Girls.

Living in California and still vocally active in the nineties, she toured with The Glenn Miller Memorial Orchestra led by Tony Osborne and visited Australia with them in late 1994. Beryl was back in Britain, appearing with the Syd Lawrence Orchestra on several of their concerts during November and December 1999.

Beryl Davis Recordings (*not complete*)

PARLOPHONE (*with Phil Green and his Swing Strings*)

F 1047 Feb 38 'Bei mir bist du schoen / I double dare you'  
F 1072 Mar 38 'Who knows'  
F 1123 May 38 'Lambeth walk / Cry baby cry'  
F 1151 Jun 38 'Sweet as a song / How'dja like to love me'

REX (*with Oscar Rabin Romany Band*)

9362 Aug 36 'This time it's real'  
9363 Aug 36 'Moon of Manakoora'  
9384 Sep 36 'Goodbye to summer'  
9512 Mar 39 'My first goodnight'  
9549 May 39 'Could be'  
9587 Jly 39 'Begin the beguine'  
9606 Jly 39 'Especially for you'  
9607 Jly 39 'One Sunday afternoon'  
9671 Nov 39 'An apple for the teacher (*with Garry Gowen*)'

(*following sides with Oscar Rabin Band at Hammersmith Palais*)

9710 Jan 40 'Knees up Mother Brown (*with Jack Cooper*

& Billy

Nichol)

9713 Jan 40 'Scatter brain (*with Garry*

Gowen)

9717 Feb 40 'I hear a dream'

9730 Feb 40 'Seventeen candles'

9742 Mar 40 'My wabba dolly (*with Billy*

Nichol)

9743 Mar 40 'Careless'

9768 Apl 40 'When the rose of Tralee met

Danny Boy'

9784 May 40 'Dreaming - Hallelujah' (*both part of*

'Romantic Melodies'

selection)

9797 Jun 40 'When our dreams grow old'

9830 Aug 40 'Shake down the stars'

9856 Sep 40 'We'll go smiling along'

9857 Sep 40 'Half-way down the street'

9885 Nov 40 'I'm nobody's baby'

9886 Nov 40 'Every day is one day nearer'

DECCA (*with Arthur Young and the Hatchett*

*Swingtette*)

F 7336 Jan 40 'Scatter brain / Ting-a-ling'  
F 7398 Jan 40 'Bluebirds in the moonlight / It's a hap-hap-  
happy day'

F 7405 Feb 40 'Oh Johnny Oh Johnny Oh / Lying in the hay'

F 7409 Feb 40 'Alexander's ragtime band / You made me

Love you'

REX (*with Oscar Rabin Band*)

9914 Jan 41 'You're breaking my heart all over again'

9964 Apl 41 'The London I love'

9980 May 41 'It's foolish but it's fun'

9981 May 41 'I ain't got nobody'

10006 Jun 41 'Heart to heart'

10054 Sep 41 'Daddy'

10058 Oct 41 'While the music plays on'

10090 Dec 41 'Wrap yourself in cotton wool'

10112 Feb 42 'When I see an elephant fly'

DECCA (*with Oscar Rabin Band*)

F 8108 Mar 42 'Day dreaming'

F 8116 Apl 42 'This is no laughing matter'

F 8123 May 42 'Tica-ti tica-ta'

F 8124 May 42 'Deep in the heart of Texas (*with Alan Dean*)

PARLOPHONE

(*first seven discs with Geraldo*

*orch*)

F 1913 Jun 42 'Miss you'

F 1933 Jly 42 'Skylark'

F 1937 Aug 42 'Three little sisters (*with Doreen Villiers,*

*Georgina, George Evans & Len*

*Camber*)'

F 1948 Oct 42 'Breathless (*with George Evans*) / Anywhere

on earth is

heaven'

F 1964 Jan 43 'Ev'ry night about this time'

F 1968 Feb 43 'When the lights go on again all over the world'

F 1970 Mar 43 'I'm old fashioned'

(*next four with No.1 Balloon Centre - Skyrockets - dance orch*)

F 2004 Dec 43 'Hold back the dawn'

F 2006 Dec 43 'The rhythm of the jeep'

F 2010 Feb 44 'My heart tells me'

F 2018 Feb 44 'No love no nothin'

DECCA (*acc as indicated*)

F 8419 Apl 44 (*with RAF dance orch*) 'A journey to a star /

No love

no nothin'

F 8455 Jun 44 (*with Nat Temple orch*) 'Drink to me only

with

thine eyes'

F 8477 Sep 44 (*with RAF dance orch*) 'Milkman keep those

bottles quiet'

F 8492 Jan 45 (*with Stephane Grapelly Quartet*)

'Don't you

know I care? / No one

else will do'

F 8658 Aug 46 'Do you love me / My heart isn't in it' (*acc by*

*Camarata Orch*)

(*The following three discs are from the film 'London*

*Town')*

F 8674 Sep 46 'My heart goes crazy' (*with The Dozen and One*)  
*Lovelies acc by Ted Heath*  
*Music)*  
 F 8675 Sep 46 'So would I' (two sides)' (*with Scotty McHarg*)  
*and The Dozen and One Lovelies*  
*acc by*  
*Camarata`s London Town Orch*  
*& Chorus)*  
 F 8676 Sep 46 'The `Ampstead Way (two sides)' (*with The*)  
*Dozen and One Lovelies acc by*  
*Camarata`s*  
*London*  
*Town Orch)*  
 F 8695 Oct 46 'You keep coming back like a song / The way  
 that the wind blows' (*acc by Bob Farnon Orch)*  
 F 8745 Feb 47 'Put that kiss back where you found it /  
 Be mine beloved'  
*(acc by BFO)*  
 H.M.V.

B 9648 Jun 48 'If my heart had a window / I want to be loved'

R.C.A. VICTOR

3244 Nov 48 'If I had a penny / No more'

M.G.M.

MGM595 Feb 53 (*with David Rose Orch*)  
 'Beautiful music to  
 love by'

## Harry DAVIS

Beryl's dad Harry, who died aged 95 in February 1997 while I was putting this part of the Directory together, was during the 1930's, 40's and 50's leader in person, if not name, of one of Britain's most popular dance bands. It was, of course, the Oscar Rabin Band. Guitar playing vocalist Harry and violinist Oscar joined forces in the band business around 1925 and soon had a residency with their five piece Romany Band at Southend's Palace Hotel. Dance hall work eventually took them to London, at the Wimbledon Palais de Dance and by the thirties, now expanded to a full size dance band, they secured a residency at the renowned Astoria Dance Hall in London's Charing Cross Road. All this time while being billed as Oscar Rabin and his Romany Band, it was Harry, always congenial and immaculately dressed who stood out front making all the announcements, while Harry was happy to run the business but remain just one of the boys in the band. This was how it was to continue during their many years at the Astoria and when they moved to the Hammersmith Palais. Having dropped the Romany tag they were now billed as The Oscar Rabin Band with Harry Davis.

During the war years they toured extensively in variety and made regular broadcasts, where it was once again Harry's voice that the listener heard. By the early fifties the band had returned to dance hall work taking up a new residency at one of London's top ballrooms, The Lyceum in the Strand.

In 1951 the successful partnership of Rabin and Davis came to an end when Harry left Britain to join his daughter Beryl, now living in America. With his wife Queenie, a former dancer, he settled over there and began a new career in the automobile industry.

Harry, born Liverpool in 1901, died in Los Angeles and is survived by his two daughters Beryl and Lisa.

## Helen DAVIS

During the late forties Helen had a long spell singing with Felix Mendelssohn and his Hawaiian Serenaders, appearing on most of their broadcasts. By the dawn of the fifties she had opted for club and dance band work, spending some time with Don Smith's Stardusters at Nottingham's Astoria Ballroom. During 1951, spotted by American pianist / singer Rose 'Chee Chee' Murphy, she was invited to return with Rose to the U.S and become part of her stage show. Unfortunately, due to illness, Helen's chance of Stateside fame was short-lived.

Back in Britain, fully recovered, she went back to playing in cabaret, did some musical comedy including 'Pardon My French' at the Prince of Wales Theatre during 1954 and a year later was singing with the Kirchin Band around dance halls. She appears to have made at least one record, on the Melodisc label.

### MELODISC

? Jan 54 'Nora's blues / Tomato'

## Marion DAVIS

For details see entry for Marion Keene.

### Marion Davis Recordings

PARLOPHONE (*Marion Davis with Oscar Rabin Band*)

F 2344 Mar 49 'A little bird told me'  
 F 2369 Jly 49 'Put your shoes on Lucy'  
 F 2400 Feb 50 (*with Marjorie Daw*) 'Jealous heart'  
 F 2404 Mar 50 'Why not now (*with Dennis Hale*) /

Don't cry Joe'  
 F 2435 Dec 50 (*with Marjorie Daw*) 'Have I told you lately  
 that  
 I love you'  
 F 2455 Apl 51 " 'Listenin` to the green grass grow'

NIXA (*Marion Davis with Eric Winstone Orch*)

NY 7742 'Turn back the hands of time (*with The Stagecoachers*) / Easy come,  
 easy go  
 (*with*

*Franklyn Boyd*)

NY 7743 Mar 52 'I don't care'

## Marjorie DAW

A native of South Africa, Marjorie arrived in this country early 1949 and, armed with an introductory letter from South African

bandleader Roy Martin, soon secured an appearance on 'Opportunity Knocks'. This led to an invitation for the attractive 22 year old to audition as a singer with Oscar Rabin, the result being that she joined his band, resident at Wimbledon Palais, in April that year. Marjorie took the commercial songs while Oscar's other female singer Marion Davis took the up-tempo numbers. She married Rabin's drummer Kenny Clare in September 1952.

Early 1954 Marjorie left the Rabin band to follow a solo career and later joined The Zodiacs vocal group.

#### Marjorie Daw Recordings

##### PARLOPHONE (with Oscar Rabin Band)

F 2369	Jly 49	I'm beginning to miss you'	
F 2382	Oct 49	'You're breaking my heart'	
F 2400	Feb 50	(with Marion Davis) 'Jealous heart'	
F 2435	Dec 50	" " 'Have I told you	that
		latey	
		I love you'	
F 2455	Apl 51	" " 'Listening to the	
		green	
		grass grow'	
F 2469	Sep 51	'The bridal waltz (with Dennis Hale) /	My
		love for you'	
F 2476	Nov 51	(with Patti Forbes) 'Longing for you'	
F 2481	Jan 52	'Down the trail of broken hearts'	

##### COLUMBIA

DB 3381	Nov 53	'You'll never know a love like mine /	
		Why'	
DB 3481	Jun 54	'Oom pah pah / Joey'	
DB 3527	Oct 54	(with Ray Burns) 'Mr. and Mrs. /	Eins
		zwei drei'	

## Julie DAWN

Born in the East End of London to Italian parents, her real name was Rosalba Juliana Maria Theresa Mostori, so it's not surprising that when she entered show-business she decided to adopt a new one. Completing her education during the 1930's she studied piano at the Guildhall School of Music and while working in a hat shop learned languages at night-school. She took ballet and tap-dancing lessons too and occasionally broke into song.

Julie's father was a chef at the popular society restaurant Quaglino's and when the Quaglino brothers heard Julie sing invited her to appear as part of their cabaret. It was with the resident Van Straten Orchestra that Julie made her first recording, 'The ladys in love with you', in July 1939. During 1940 she spent about six months touring with Harry Roy's Band and sang on several of their discs. During the early forties she also recorded with the bands of Billy Thorburn Carroll Gibbons and Harry Leader.

By May 1941 Julie had moved on to Eric Winstone's Swing Quartet, that soon expanded into a full dance band. She was to remain with Eric, during which time she played several Butlin summer seasons, until leaving to go solo in 1951. However, she didn't leave before marrying one of the band, tenor saxophone player Eddie

Mordue. Julie made numerous records with Winstone. While remaining a freelance singer playing mostly in cabaret, Julie continued to broadcast with the Winstone Band. From March 1953 she replaced Jean Campbell on the B.B.C Show Band 'Saturday Show', and other radio work included 'Workers Playtime' and the like.

From mid-1954 Julie toured in variety on a bill that included Michael Bentine and Peter Sellers. Over the following year or so she turned up on several radio series, 'Our Kind Of Music' on Monday evenings with The Keynotes and The Bill McGuffie All Stars, 'Southern Serenade' on Sundays, and a series with a Spanish flavour, 'Siesta'. From July 1957 she was one of the vocal team on a new series of that long running show 'Sing It Again'. During the late fifties Julie became a sort of radio 'Agony Aunt' with a three times weekly programme on which she read listeners letters, helped solve their problems and managed to sing a song or two in a show that continued for about ten years.

On disc, after her years with Eric Winstone, Julie was never tied to any one band or label and recorded with several. In late 1955 she became probably the only singer without a record contract ever to make the hit parade when her vocal on Cyril Stapleton's recording of 'Blue star' reached No.2 in the charts. Other popular discs included a cover of Eartha Kitt's 'Sweet and gentle / Freddy' pairing for Edmund Ros, a fun double with Tony Brent and duets with Jean Paul Marcel, him singing in French, her in English. This was the idea of producer Ray Martin, who considered it a sure-fire success "as all housewives find Frenchmen romantic" (Marcel was in fact Belgian).

Julie was still very active in the mid-nineties, liveing in London, she entertained fellow guests with a half hour of song at the 1996 annual Memory Lane magazine party. Sadly her death was reported in June 2000.

#### Julie Dawn Recordings

##### PARLOPHONE (with Van Straten Music)

F 1505	Jly 39	'The lady's in love with you'
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##### REGAL-ZONOPHONE

##### (first five with the Harry Roy Band)

MR 3402	Dec 40	'Our love affair'
MR 3419	Dec 40	'He's my uncle'
		(with Marjorie Kingsley & H.R.)
MR 3429	Jan 41	'Moon for sale'
MR 3451	Mar 41	'Rockaby baby'
MR 3457	Mar 41	'Don't worry sweetheart'
MR 3481	Apl 41	(with Harry Leader Band)
		'Waltzing in the clouds / How
		did he look?'

(with The London Piano Accordion Band directed by Eric Winstone)

MR 3488	41	'It's foolish but it's fun'
MR 3500	41	'I'll think of you'
MR 3501	41	'The muffin man'
MR 3531	41	'Just a little cottage'

##### (with Eric Winstone Accordion Band)

MR 3544	41	'I'll never let a day pass by'
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MR 3563 41 'Yours'  
 MR 3574 41 'There`s a land of begin again'  
 MR 3606 42 'I know why'  
 MR 3626 42 'There`s something about that town'  
 MR 3633 42 'I don`t want to walk without you'

COLUMBIA (with Eric Winstone Swing Quartet)

FB 2634 May 41 'Isn`t that just like love / How did he look?'  
 FB 2657 Jun 41 'Boa notte'  
 FB 2687 Oct 41 'Whispering grass'  
 FB 2710 Nov 41 'Cornsilk'

PARLOPHONE (with Billy Thorburn`s The Organ,

The Dance

Band & Me)

F 1887 42 'Ten million kisses'  
 F 1893 42 'There`s a land of begin again'  
 F 1898 42 'What more can I say?'  
 F 1903 42 'If I could paint a memory / Lullaby to a hero'  
 F 1912 42 'Somebody else is taking my place /

Sometimes'

F 1935 42 'The blue hills of Maine'  
 F 1940 42 'Pennsylvania polka'

REGAL-ZONOPHONE (with Eric Winstone Band)

MR 3647 Jly 42 'I threw a kiss in the ocean'  
 MR 3677 Nov 42 'My devotion'  
 MR 3686 Feb 43 'Mister Five by Five'  
 MR 3693 Apl 43 'As time goes by / Let`s get lost'  
 MR 3697 Apl 43 'I dream of you'  
 MR 3704 Jun 43 'Lover`s lullaby'

H.M.V. (with Eric Winstone Band)

BD 5840 Mar 44 (with Alan Kane) 'Don`t worry baby / Choo-choo

special'

BD 5841 Mar 44 'A journey to a star'  
 BD 5848 May 44 'There`s nothing like music'  
 BD 5853 May 44 'Do nothin` till you hear from me'  
 BD 5863 Nov 44 'Time on my hands / Chloe'  
 BD 5878 Feb 45 'I`m gonna love that guy'  
 BD 5893 Jun 45 'Anywhere'  
 BD 5898 Aug 45 'How little we know'  
 BD 5902 Aug 45 'I should care / I walked in'

COLUMBIA (with Carroll Gibbons Savoy Hotel Orpheans)

FB 3049 Jly 44 'I`ll be seeing you / Time alone will tell'  
 FB 3060 Oct 44 'It had to be you / I`ll try'  
 FB 3068 Nov 44 'When they ask about you'  
 FB 3069 Nov 44 'Shine on harvest moon'  
 FB 3209 May 46 'This heart of mine'

REGAL ZONOPHONE (with Jack Wallace Band)

MR 3773 Apl 46 'Take me in your arms'  
 MR 3775 Jun 46 'Temptation'

M.G.M (with Eric Winstone Orchestra)

MGM 156 Nov 48 'Anything I dream is possible'  
 MGM 178 Apl 49 'The crystal gazer'  
 MGM 239 Oct 49 'Baby it`s cold outside'  
 MGM 289 May 50 'The tale a sailor told / (with Leslie Howard)

Across the

meadow'

MGM 366 Feb 51 'Lonely dream, lonely lips, lonely heart'

COLUMBIA

DB 3225 Jan 53 (with Jean Paul Marcel) 'It`s love / So close in my arms'  
 DB 3227 Feb 53 'A moth and a flame / Now'  
 DB 3251 Mar 53 (with Tony Brent) 'Ding dong boogie / When are we gonna get married'  
 DB 3261 Apl 53 'Wild horses / The whistling kettle and a

dancing cat'

DB 3304 Jun 53 'Pretend / The golden years'  
 DB 3335 Sep 53 'A breaker of hearts / Lonely lover'  
 DB 3429 Feb 54 'Off shore / Red, red, red'  
 DB 3634 May 55 (with Edmundo Ros orch) 'Sweet and gentle /

Freddy'

PARLOPHONE

R 3910 Oct 54 'Now and forever / The word that I whisper'

DECCA

F 10559 Jly 55 (with Cyril Stapleton orch) 'Blue star'

ORIOLE

CB 1347 Dec 56 'Two different worlds / Little ship'

## Colin DAY

In 1956 Colin, a grey haired 21 year old singer from Exeter, joined Denny Boyce and his Orchestra who were resident at Purley`s Orchid Ballroom. Two years later he had moved over to the David Ede led Oscar Rabin Band at Wimbledon Palais, alongside fellow vocalists Lorie Mann and Mel Gaynor. With the Rabin Band Colin became a regular voice on the very popular Friday lunchtime pop radio series 'Go Man Go'.

During the early sixties, setting off on a solo path, he played the clubs and also toured with Helen Shapiro. During 1962 he was one of the team (the others were Anita Harris, Christine Campbell and David Macbeth) who represented Britain at the European Song Contest held in Belgium. The same year he re-joined Lorie Mann on a new mid-day pop show 'Things Are Swinging' and also aired on 'Ring-a-ding Ding'. Melody Maker rated him "one of our better vocal prospects".

Colin Day Recordings

PARLOPHONE

R 4709 Nov 60 'Till / Lost'  
 R 4742 61 'Till there was you / The golden years'  
 R 4803 61 'Brazil / Angelique'

## Jill DAY

Jill, a petite five foot two shapely green eyed blonde, was a little bundle of energy with a fiery temper to match. Born in Brighton on 5th December 1930 and christened Yvonne she was the daughter of well known local bookmaker and racehorse owner Fred Page. Expected to join the family business, brother Bert Page became a

successful jockey, at the age of fourteen Yvonne was sent to college to train for a secretarial career but, with the glitter of show business in her eyes and already showing her independent side, she had other ideas and auditioned for Harry Roy.

Always happy to have an attractive female decorate the bandstand Harry booked her and, still only 14 years of age, from April till August 1945 she toured with his band in variety under the name Jill Page. Another young singer in Harry's band at the time was Renee Lester, a lady who also later changed her name, to Suzi Miller.

All thought of shorthand-typing now behind her, Jill went on to join the chorus of 'Follow The Girls' that starred Arthur Askey and Evelyn Dall and opened at London's His Majesty's theatre in October 1945. She then had a spell as understudy to Triss Henderson in 'Piccadilly Hayride' at the Prince of Wales theatre before joining a song and dance troop in the revue 'Limelight', back in her home town of Brighton.

It was here that Syd Dean, bandleader at the local Regent Dance Hall, saw her and by 1949, still known as Jill Page, she was resident vocalist with his band. Fellow vocalists in Syd's band were Harry Bolton and Billy Richards. Jill sang on several of Syd's Columbia recordings and made her first broadcasts with the band, of which a 'Melody Maker' review commented "here is a new singer who really shines". During the summer of 1950 she also aired regularly with the Malcolm Mitchell Trio on their Tuesday evening series 'May We Come In' and appeared in late night West End cabaret at the Café de Paris.

After about 18 months at the Regent, ever eager for something better, she was off to Paris to appear in cabaret at night clubs, including the Club Champs Elysees with Bernard Hilda's Orchestra. Back home in May 1951 she replaced Diana Coupland with Cyril Grantham's Orchestra at the Dorchester Hotel, did some radio guest spots with different bands and by the end of the year had become a regular vocalist on Geraldo's 'Tip Top Tunes' series.

Eve Boswell having just left to go solo, Jill took her place touring and recording with Geraldo's Orchestra. It was Geraldo who changed her name to Jill Day and with his popularity on radio and record it was a name the public soon became to know well.

Jill had a small part, playing a cabaret singer, in the 1953 comedy film 'Always a Bride' and in March 1954 was voted into third place in the female singer section of Melody Maker's readers poll, behind Lita Roza and Cleo Laine. But by June that year, reported as on the verge of a nervous breakdown, she had left Geraldo "to take a long rest". Jill had always considered herself as 'more than just a band singer' and was no doubt frustrated at being just that.

Going solo, on Saturday 21st August 1954, she appeared on television in 'I'll Be Seeing You' and a month later was touring with a package show entertaining servicemen in Malta. Her solo variety debut at home came on Monday 1st November, beginning a variety tour at Manchester Hippodrome on a bill that included trumpet star Kenny Baker. 1954 also saw Jill's solo disc appearance, 'Little Johnny Rainbow' on

Parlophone. Despite several good attempts and a later change of label she never had any chart success. One commentator put her poor disc rating down to the fact that she looked so good on stage, that when you just heard her there was something missing!

Her second film part, in 'All For Mary' during 1955, was a starring role as a Swiss innkeeper's daughter wooed by Nigel Patrick and David Tomlinson, two Englishmen on a skiing holiday. The same year she was the singing voice of Brigitte Bardot in the film 'Doctor At Sea'.

Jill's most important variety date during 1955 was her season in the revue 'Talk Of The Town' with comedians Jimmy Edwards and Tony Hancock at London's Adelphi Theatre from April till June. She had planned a summer show to follow but had to miss out for health reasons. Several T.V. appearances during the year concluded with her playing Prince Charming to television announcer Sylvia Peters' Cinderella, in a BBC Christmas Eve version of the panto written by Eric Sykes.

A very shrewd business woman, she bought a half share in a gymnasium in 1956 to add to her empire, that also included a theatrical agency, racehorses and a children's clothing company. Demanding as these other interests obviously were Jill still pursued her show-biz ambition, taking on her first big summer season in the 'Dave King Show' at Blackpool's Winter Gardens from 16th June 1956. But by the first week of July she had pulled out on doctor's orders, to be replaced by Shani Wallis. During September she played one of her, now rare, variety weeks at Finsbury Park Empire. Now more likely to be seen on television she made several appearances on the pop music show 'Off the Record'.

1957 probably marked the peak of Jill's success. In March she began her very own BBC TV series 'The Jill Day Show', spent the summer at Blackpool in Tom Arnold's 'Super Review' at the Hippodrome with Ken Dodd and Stan Stennett and in October returned to the Adelphi Theatre in the play 'The Lovebirds', taking over the leading role from Dora Bryan who was expecting a baby. Playing opposite Ronald Shiner, she received great acclaim for her performance as an actress-comedienne. The year also included another great day for Jill, for on Tuesday 14th May she secretly married, at Paddington Register Office, a man she had worked with back in the Geraldo days who had acted as her musical adviser since, poll topping alto-saxist Douglas Robinson.

During the run of 'Lovebirds' Jill claimed she was considering giving up pop singing in favour of stage work "because there's more money in it", but when the play ended in February 1958 she was back in cabaret, for five weeks, at London's Society Restaurant, something she repeated in November. Although Jill's recording career had all but dried up - an L.P. with the Peter Knight Singers under the title 'Knight and Day' came along in 1960 - she still made regular appearances on television, 'Top Numbers' on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 'Six Five Special' on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, Eamonn Andrews 'Toast of the Town' with Norman Wisdom and Larry Adler on Easter Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April, 'Hit the Headlines'

a musical all about an American D.J.'s visit to London (played by Dickie Valentine) on Easter Sunday, Cyril Stapleton's 'Show Band Show' on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April and 'Billy Cotton's Band Show' on 8<sup>th</sup> May. Without doubt, despite the late fifties influence of rock & roll, a quality artist like Jill was still very much in demand.

If her live appearances were fewer this was probably down to personal choice, but one date she couldn't refuse was the Royal Variety Show on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1959, held for the first time in Manchester at the Palace theatre, appearing with the Northern Dance Orchestra. This was followed by another Blackpool summer season, at the Opera House with Jimmy Jewel & Ben Warris.

Come the sixties it was mostly cabaret and TV plus an occasional summer season. Jill and Dougie had two sons, but when one of them died from leukaemia she went into decline and virtually gave up performing altogether, concentrating on her business interests.

Tragedy struck the Robinson family again on the 15th November 1990 when Jill died at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Kingston on Thames, from cancer of the liver. Reported as not an easy person to work with, often-told stories relate of the time she once punched a woman at the Pigalle Restaurant for talking while she was singing and another occasion she is reported as having tipped a bowl of peas over a waiter who made a noise. True or not, she did have a sharp temper, often vented on an unexpected victim. Despite this Jill gave full value for money, always glamorous and full of energy, rarely standing still on stage she put a lot of effort into her songs.

#### Jill Day Recordings

##### COLUMBIA (as Jill Page with Syd Dean band)

FB 3533 Nov 49 'Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday'  
 FB 3538 Dec 49 'On a dreamers holiday'  
 FB 3547 Mar 50 'When the world has forgotten / You shouldn't

have kissed me the first time (with

Harry Bolton)  
 PHILIPS

PB 262 Mar 54 (with Geraldo's Orch & The Top Hatters)

'Oh  
 baby mine'  
 PARLOPHONE

R 3922 Oct 54 'Little Johnny Rainbow / Wherever you may be'  
 R 3955 Dec 54 'The snowy snowy mountains /

Lonely

nightingale'  
 R 3987 Feb 55 'Hold me in your arms / Ding dong'  
 R 4021 May 55 'Chee-chee-oo chee / Sincerely'  
 R 4050 Jly 55 'Promises / Whistlin' Willy' (acc by Tony

Osborne orch)  
 H.M.V.

POP 158 Jan 56 'I hear you knocking / Far away from everything'

POP 199 Apr 56 'A tear fell / A holiday affair' (acc by FCO)

POP 254 Oct 56 'Happiness street / Somewhere in the great

beyond' (acc by Frank

Cordell orch)

POP 288 Jan 57 'I dreamed / Give her my love when you

meet her' (acc by Tony

Osborne orch)

POP 320 Mar 57 'Mangos / Cinco robles'

#### POLYDOR

BM 56039 Dec 65 'I've got my love to keep me warm /

I'm old

fashioned'

## Larry DAY

Considering the fact that Larry recorded several sides for H.M.V. very little seems to have been reported about his other activities. A good looking light baritone, born in North London on 7th December 1921, he cut his performing teeth appearing around the Granada circuit when he was eighteen. Following this up during wartime he became a member of the famous 'Stars In Battledress' unit, touring Europe for two years, for a long time in a show headed by Terry-Thomas.

What happened to him after demob in 1946 I've not discovered, but in 1948 he was singing with Ronnie Munro's band, and appeared with them at Butlin's Pwllheli Holiday Camp alongside fellow vocalist Dorothy Clinton. When Ronnie signed him up Larry was apparently working behind a shop counter.

Early 1950's broadcasts included the Norman Evans comedy series 'Over the Garden Wall'. On record he made several appearances as vocal refrain on Frank Cordell discs and sang a duet with Alma Cogan, but none made any particular impact. I believe he was a member of the Sam Browne Singers, busy during the early fifties.

#### Larry Day Recordings

##### H.M.V. (all with the Frank Cordell Orch)

B 10036 Mar 51 'Music by the angels'  
 B 10046 Mar 51 'I still feel the same about you / As long

as the

river flows on'

B 10072 Apr 51 'List'nin to the green grass grow'  
 B 10077 Apr 51 'Mary Rose / Somewhere, somehow, someday'

B 10109 Aug 51 'With these hands / My truly truly fair'

B 10134 Sep 51 'Oh beauty / That's how a love song is born'

B 10160 Nov 51 'My boy / Belle belle my liberty bell'  
 B 10307 Jly 52 (duet with Alma Cogan) 'The homing waltz'

B 10323 Aug 52 'Here in my heart / Wonderful'

## Alan DEAN

Alan Dean was a founder member of two popular vocal groups and a prime mover in the late forties be-bop music style.

Born in 1st August 1924 in a poor area of East Ham, London, he contracted polio as a child which left him with a permanent limp. A member of the local church choir, he was a boy soprano. His early working life was as an engineering



draughtsman, while for fun he played accordion and occasionally sang with local amateur groups.

Alan's first professional show business job was in 1941, playing accordion in Happy Blake's Band at the Club Cuba off London's Shaftesbury Avenue. Alan worked with Art Thompson's Band at the Court Royal Hotel and Jack Wallace at the Embassy Club. In early 1942 he was singing in cabaret at the Nuthouse Club where he was spotted by Harry Roy who signed him for his 'Band of the Week' radio broadcasts. He has been named as probably the unidentified singer on Harry's 1942 recording of 'Angeline', a song he also recorded with the Oscar Rabin Band, which he joined in April 1942 when Cyril Shane left to join the army.

For four years Alan toured Britain and Europe with Oscar Rabin, moving over in 1946 to the Ambrose Orchestra appearing on disc with both. During the late forties Alan broadcast with many bands including those of Harry Leader, Frank Weir (he took over the piano stool in Frank's Lansdowne Restaurant Orchestra in December 1947 when George Shearing left for America) and Jimmy Leach's Organolians, with whom he also recorded.

In 1947 Alan was a founder member of The Song Pedlars vocal group which also did a considerable amount of radio work and was also one of the The Debonaires group. He appeared in the 1948 comedy musical film 'Melody in the Dark', all about a haunted house, that also featured singer Terry Devon and The Stardusters Orchestra.

The American style of music known as be-bop (or re-bop), re-working many old classics (and later specially written pieces) in a new fragmented melodic form involving much use of discords and scat vocals, was now becoming popular over here. Played in the States by such respected names as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, it was having a big influence on many young British musicians and Alan was very much one of them, becoming something of an expert.

Decca Records, wishing to take advantage of this new sound, asked him to form a be-bop group to record. Known as Alan Dean and his Be-boppers, the line up (some of the periods top musicians) were Reg Arnold on trumpet, Johnny Dankworth alto sax, Ronnie Scott tenor sax, Pete Chilvers guitar, Bernie Fenton piano, Joe Muddel bass, Laurie Morgan drums with Alan arranging and adding vocal on some numbers. A similar group also recorded on the Esquire label. A reviewer in the paper 'Musical Express' remarked that he rated Dean one of our top vocalists and as such he would have done himself a favour if he had made these be-bop records using an alias! (I'm inclined to agree with him).

Early in 1948 Alan was again in at the birth of a vocal group, this time it was The Keynotes. Assembled and led by Johnny Johnston for a new BBC radio series, 'Take it from Here', the quartet was completed by two girls Terry Devon and Irene King. Alan also acted as announcer on the first series of T.I.F.H that began 23rd March 1948. He was also compere on many late forties jazz concerts and sang regularly with The Skyrockets and other bands.

On 17th May 1949 Alan married Muriel

Hoffman at Saint James' Catholic Church in London's Spanish Place with Johnny Johnston as best man.

Also a fine arranger Alan found this work and his solo commitments on radio and cabaret becoming more demanding, so in January 1950 gave up his place with the Keynotes and embarked on a totally solo career. He signed a variety contract with impresario Bernard Delfont that guaranteed him £20,000 over two years. In June he played his first week in variety at Shepherds Bush Empire. Billed as "The Young Singing Star" he was joint top of the bill.

From February he had been featured vocalist on radio's 'Band Parade' and with Benny Lee, Carole Carr and Terry Devon was on many early broadcasts of that most enjoyable long running series 'Sing it Again'. During July he began another radio series 'That's an Idea' with Wally Peterson, a relaxed programme in which they chatted and both sang a few songs.

On New Year's Eve 1950 Alan was a guest on Ted Heath's Palladium Swing Session. At the time the Alan Dean Fan Club was estimated to be one of the largest in the country and it isn't surprising that he regularly topped popularity polls.

In 1951 Alan began recording for H.M.V., his first side 'Come back to Angouleme' being another vocal quartet, but this time using a bit of multi-tracking they were all Alan. In May he began a series on Radio Luxembourg called 'Anything Can Happen' with Harry Secombe, Avril Angers and Bob Monkhouse. By September he had received an invitation from an old friend, pianist George Shearing (they had worked together in Frank Weir's Lansdowne House Orchestra), to come and work in the States, and despite having everything going for him here he accepted, as he said "just for the hell of it".

Once there offers of radio and television work soon made him consider a long stay and he signed up with the American General Artists Corporation. One of his first bookings must have more than convinced him that this was the place to be. He was engaged to sing at the 'coming out' celebration of wealthy Mr. & Mrs. Earl Nathan's daughter, Sue, which was held on the 120th floor of the Empire State Building. He was paid a fee equivalent to several hundred pounds for the evening's work.

Alan stayed in America during the fifties becoming very popular as a club and hotel band singer doing much T.V. and radio work. He continued to make records on the M.G.M. (several released in Britain) and Rama labels. In April 1957 during a short visit back home he made a number of radio and TV appearances, plus a recording session with Columbia.

In the early sixties, with rock 'n' roll taking over on both sides of the Atlantic, Alan went to live and work in Australia. Initially he worked in television there as a performer, but later developed a more profitable career forming Deanote Productions that composed and recorded radio and T.V jingles. He was still there running his 'jingle' factory into the 1990s.

Alan Dean Recordings

REGAL ZONOPHONE

MR 3627 Apl 42 (with Harry Roy band)  
'Angeline'

DECCA (with Oscar Rabin Band)

F 8123 Apl 42 'Angeline'  
F 8124 Apl 42 'Deep in the heart of Texas' (with  
Beryl Davis)  
F 8144 May 42 'You again'  
(with The Ambrose Orchestra)

F 8620 Apl 46 'Chickery chick'  
F 8634 Jly 46 'Oh what it seemed to be / Strange  
music'  
F 8716 Oct 46 'Three beautiful words of love'  
F 8743 Feb 47 'Ole buttermilk sky'  
F 8765 Apl 47 'A gal in calico'  
F 8766 May 47 'People will say we're in love /  
Oh what a beautiful  
morning'

F 8951 Sep 48 'The woody woodpecker' (this is  
an Anne Shelton  
orch & the  
the  
effects!)

H.M.V. (with The Skyrocets Orchestra)

BD 6023 Oct 48 'Say it every day'  
BD 6026 Oct 48 'The hungry heart'

PARLOPHONE (with Oscar Rabin Band)

R2322 Nov 48 'Girl in blue'

COLUMBIA (with Jimmy Leach New  
Organolians)

FB 3358 Dec 47 'An apple blossom wedding'  
FB 3370 Feb 48 'Near you'  
FB 3400 Jun 48 'Teresa'  
FB 3417 Sep 48 'You turned the tables on me /  
Little white lies'  
FB 3432 Nov 48 'Dream girl / The chapel over the  
hill'  
FB 3467 Mar 49 'A little bird told me'  
FB 3478 May 49 (with Johnny Johnston) 'Suvla Bay /  
Old New  
England moon'  
FB 3539 Jan 50 (with Carroll Gibbons orch) 'So ends  
my  
dream can't I'

ESQUIRE (with his All Star Sextet /  
Beboppers)

10-006 49 'Galaxy / ?'  
10-010 Mar 49 'Confirmation / First gear'  
10-033 Aug 49 'My baby likes to be-bop / Disc  
jockey jump'  
10-050 Apl 50 (sings scat bop with All Star Sextet)  
'Jack fiddles while  
Norman Burns'  
5-023 Jun 51 (with Johnny Dankworth  
Seven) 'So in  
love /  
Blue moon'  
DECCA

F 9188 Jly 49 'Gone with the windmill / Barbados'  
(Alan Dean and his Be-  
boppers)  
F 9222 Sep 49 'Elevenses / Ool-ya-koo' "

"  
F 9361 Feb 50 'When there's love at home /  
Really and truly'  
(acc by The Temple Bells & Nat  
Temple Orch)  
F 9454 Jun 50 'If I loved you / Somewhere a star is  
shining'  
(acc by Bruce  
Campbell Orch)  
F 9492 Sep 50 'Autumn leaves / The yodelling  
ghost (with The  
yodeling)'  
Stargazers & John Macauley  
(both acc by Nat  
Temple Orch)

H.M.V. (acc on all by Frank Cordell orch)

B 10102 Jly 51 'If you go / Come back to Angoulene'  
B 10141 Oct 51 'Longing for you / Confetti'  
B 10156 Nov 51 'So deep my love / Love is the thing'

M.G.M.

495 Apl 52 'Be anything, but be mine / Since  
my love  
has gone' (acc by Leroy  
Holmes orch)  
523 Jly 52 'You'll never be mine / Do you care'  
547 Sep 52 'Luna rosa / Raggie taggle  
gypsies'  
654 Aug 53 'I'll forget you / Make me your  
slave'  
730 Apl 54 'What are you waiting for /  
Call me  
anytime at all'  
789 Jan 55 'Tonight my love / The song from  
Desiree'  
847 Sep 55 'Remember me wherever you go /  
Love is all  
that matters'  
901 Jun 56 'Without you / Take a bow'

## COLUMBIA

DB 3932 Apl 57 'Life is but a dream / Rock and  
roll tarantella'

## DECCA

F 11947 Aug 64 'The time it takes / Dizzy heights'

## Syd DEAN

Syd Dean is probably best remembered for the many years he led the band at Brighton's Regent Ballroom, where his friendly personality and professionalism made him a big hit with dancers. Born near Stratford-on-Avon on 4th June 1907, Syd at first followed his father into a motor engineering career but had soon given that up to become pianist in the pit orchestra at Boscombe Hippodrome. Finding this resident job somewhat dull he moved on, playing with various dance bands across the country.

By the mid-thirties Syd had progressed to leading his own band, first a quartet for a season on Jersey and then a bigger outfit at such diverse places as Terry's Ballroom, Birmingham, the Aberdeen Palais, Derby's New Plaza and Madame Tussaud's Waxworks. By 1940 he had reached the height of fame as leader at London's prestigious Astoria Ballroom in Charing Cross Road from which he made several broadcasts (he had first been on radio, as a solo pianist in 'Keyboard Cavalcade', back in 1936). It wasn't

long before wartime service in the R.A.F. intervened and Syd spent the next four years in uniform.

Demob in 1945 heralded his return to bandleading and an association with the Regent Dance Hall in Brighton that lasted over twelve years. At The Regent he led both his 12 piece dance orchestra and the contrasting seven piece Strings in Rhythm. During this time he introduced a number of young vocalists, the most successful being Jill Page who went on to greater fame as Jill Day (Unfortunately Syd turned down Alma Cogan before anybody had heard of her). Others singers with the band included Harry Bolton, Joyce Sheppard, Vicki Anderson and Don Archell.

Soon back on radio too, his band over the years played almost two hundred editions of 'Music While You Work' and there were many other broadcasts, often with guest singers. While resident at Brighton, Syd took the band on a 'holiday' tour of other dance halls, most years.

The band first recorded in 1949 on the Columbia label. Later Decca recordings included the very successful comedy numbers 'I see the Moon' and 'Twenty Tiny fingers' made with The Stargazers vocal group. Syd and his band appeared in the 1951 film 'Lady Godiva Rides Again', which also featured a young vocalist named Jimmy Young.

In January 1957 newspapers reported Syd sacking the entire brass section and hiring new players, but still the band played on. At least until the end of 1958 when Syd surprised and upset many Brighton dancers when he announced he was moving to the Orchid Ballroom at Purley. But that residency was short lived and the summer of 1959 found him leading at Butlin's Pwllheli Holiday Camp, followed by a spell at Southsea.

In May 1960 Syd was back in London with a nine piece at the newly opened Gaumont State Ballroom, a magnificent dance hall converted from part of the huge Gaumont State Theatre at Kilburn. Then in April 1962 came another season at the Astoria which lasted for almost a year before Syd returned to the Regent at Brighton on 3rd February 1963, replacing the Harry Leader Band. When in 1966 the ballroom closed (the site developed as retail shops) he became M.D. at the nearby Top Rank Suite.

With disco music taking over in the early seventies Syd left Top Rank, preferring to freelance playing for private functions, concerts and regular weekend bookings. By the time he retired in the mid-eighties he had been bandleading for over 50 years and even then was still willing to do the occasional one night stand.

Never a great innovator, Syd, a smart small man, was happy to play danceable dance music, greatly appreciated by couples who flocked to the dance halls during the forties, fifties and sixties. Always willing to move with the times he included the latest tunes and dance styles as they came out.

Syd, who died on 1st August 1993 aged 86, survived by his wife Nora an ex-dancer, will always be remembered as "Brighton's ambassador of music", a title bestowed on him by a local newspaper.

## Syd Dean Band Recordings COLUMBIA

FB 3533 Nov 49 'Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday (v. Jill Page &

Harry Bolton) / You red

Head (v. H.B.)

FB 3538 Dec 49 'The Scottish samba (v. Harry Bolton) /

Dreamer's holiday (v.

Jill Page)

FB 3547 Mar 50 'When the world has forgotten (v. Jill Page) /

You shouldn't have kissed me

the first time'

(v. J.P.

& H.B.)

DECCA

F 9441 May 50 'Molly O'Reilly / Who hit me'

(next four discs are with The Stargazers

vocal group)

F 10213 Nov 53 'I see the moon / Eh cumpari'

F 10223 Dec 53 'It's Christmas all over the world / The

little fir tree'

F 10259 Feb 54 'The happy wanderer / Till we two are one'

F 10626 Oct 55 'Twenty tiny fingers / An old beer bottle'

## MELODISC

P 231 55 'Sunshine bus / The snake'

## Diana DECKER

Diana, an American with an English mother, was born in 1926 and came to Britain with her parents during the late thirties. At first she toured in variety with E.N.S.A but soon her good looks and acting ability took her into films, her first in 1943 being 'San Demetrio London', the story of a burning oil tanker on the high seas. Diana went on to appear in more than a dozen films before the fifties were out.

In December 1945 she was on radio introducing a series for young performers 'Knocking at the Door' and also appeared as compere on some 'Variety Bandbox' broadcasts. During the late forties and early fifties Diana made numerous broadcasts with Arthur Askey, including his series 'Arthur's Inn', and in 1950 was teamed with Petula Clark on 'Study In A Flat', a series with a story and a song.

By now Diana had begun making records, partnering Dick Bentley on some light hearted numbers for the Parlophone label. These early sides went virtually unnoticed and it was not until her first solo disc for Columbia, some three years later in August 1953, that we thought of Diana as a pop singer. That recording, 'Poppa Piccolino', became a hit parade success and the only version of the song (also covered by Petula Clark, The Beverley Sisters and Billy Cotton) to enter the charts. Diana's disc was there for ten weeks rising to a very favourable No.2 position the week of 12th December (really it was No.3 as both the Frankie Laine and David Whitfield recordings of 'Answer me' were joint No.1). As it turned out, it was her only chart entry despite several well received discs during the mid-fifties.

After her record success Diana began touring in variety, never quite top of the bill but always a

very worthy support artist. By the late fifties she had reverted to mainly straight acting in TV and on film, plus the occasional cabaret appearance. She played Stevie Ames in the late fifties I.T.V detective series 'Mark Saber' that starred Donald Gray, and appeared in the sixties films, 'Lolita' and 'Devils of Darkness'

Later she married entertainer Eddy Eden and in early 2002, now a widow, was living quietly in a Regent's Park hotel, quite bemused by the report that E.M.I. intended to reissue her recordings on C.D.

Diana Decker Recordings

PARLOPHONE (with Dick Bentley)

R 3269 Apl 50 'Didn't we / Jealous'  
R 3301 Jun 50 'I wanna go home with you'

COLUMBIA

DB 3325 Aug 53 'Poppa Piccolino / If I had a golden umbrella'  
DB 3344 Sep 53 (with Ray Burns) 'My old jalopy / Fripperies

and frills'  
DB 3377 Nov 53 'I'm a little Christmas cracker / Do you love old

Santa Claus'  
DB 3407 Jan 54 'Oh my papa / Crystal ball' (acc by Ray

Martin orch)  
DB 3434 Feb 54 'The happy wanderer / Till we two are one'

(acc by Norrie  
Paramor orch)  
DB 3480 May 54 'The man with the banjo / Jilted' (acc by Norrie

Paramor orch)  
DB 3489 Jun 54 'Never never land / Kitty in the basket'  
DB 3508 Jly 54 'Mama mia / Percy the penguin'  
DB 3531 Oct 54 'Sisters / Abracadabra'  
DB 3567 Jan 55 (with Ruby Murray, Ray Burns, Ronnie Harris)

'Spring spring spring /  
Goin' courtin'  
DB 3574 Feb 55 'Open the window of your heart / The boy and the violin'

DB 3588 Mar 55 'Apples peaches and cherries / Paper valentine'

(acc by Norrie  
Paramor orch)  
DB 3607 May 55 (with The Big Ben Banjo Band) 'Big Ben's banjo band / I'm in favour of friendship'  
DB 3739 Mar 56 'Willie can / Rock-a-boogie baby'

## Dinah DEE

In 1954 Manchester born Diana Hatton formed an 11 piece all girl band known as Dinah Dee and her Girl Friends. The idea, promoted by agent Alf Preager, was to capitalise on the demand for glamour acts from the many American service camps still scattered across the south of England.

Pianist / vocalist Diana had for several years toured as one half of an act called Dina & Margie. The first appearance with her band was on 2nd October 1954 at Brize Norton U.S. air base, while their London debut came the

following January at Hammersmith Palais. A big boost came with a booking for the whole 1955 summer season at Saint George's Hall, Guernsey.

Throughout the remaining fifties the girls did much travelling, playing service camps at home and on the Continent plus a tour of Morocco. They made a rare television appearance on 14th June 1958 on 'Six Five Special'.

In 1960 another summer season, afternoons only, at Blackpool's Palace Theatre in 'The Jackie Rae Show' came to an abrupt end after only two weeks when the show closed due to poor attendances. The band continued into the sixties decade playing mainly one night stands. They don't appear to have made any records.

## Eric DELANEY

Eric was probably Britain's most visually flamboyant drummer, well known for the inventive tympani solos played on his double sized drum kit.

Born in London on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1924, his first drum kit was a 6d set from Woolworth's when he was 18 months old. At the age of eight he took up piano, but reverted to drums four years later. Initially a self taught percussionist he was already leading his own group at London's Brent Bridge Hotel in 1937 when he was only thirteen years old.

First professional job was with Harry Roy's Juveniles in March 1938. Now a pupil of top drummer Max Abrams, he went on tour in Hughie Green's production 'Hurrah It's Butlin's', that began a nationwide tour on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1938 at Margate Hippodrome. During 1939 he was appearing in variety again, this time leading his Swing Stars group. Eric continued touring until May 1941 when he joined Norman Robinson's band for five months palais work at Morecambe, before moving to Jimmy Honeyman at Streatham Locarno.

Eric went on to fill the drum stool of an Ambrose Octet and was a member of Harry Roy's Lyricals before joining the R.A.F in October 1942. Playing with R.A.F Madley station band kept the drumsticks in practice and he also appeared in the service revue 'The Flags Are Flying', which toured India, Burma and Ceylon.

After his demob in May 1946 Eric studied at Guildhall School of Music, while regularly broadcasting with Stephane Grappelly and he also played in the Hamish Menzies Quartet at The Rose Room night-spot. In December 1946 he had the good fortune to be picked to replace Joe Watson in the popular Geraldo Orchestra. The following years were a great experience with much touring, recording and broadcasting, allowing Eric to develop his characteristic style. He also found time to marry his childhood girl-next-door sweetheart Valerie Cox. At the wedding on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1947 at St. Matthias Church, George Shearing played the organ sending them down the isle with a bop version of the 'Wedding March'.

Being ambitious, by mid-1950 Eric was beginning to feel his talents were not being maximised so he left Geraldo to join the more progressive Squadronaires Band, doing a swop

with long time Squad's drummer Jock Cummings. It only took Eric six months to realise he preferred Geraldo's outfit and Gerry was happy to welcome him back in January 1951. To let off steam he formed a bop group with a number of like minded musicians in the band for the odd one-off concert.

He also began to expand his own arranging and composing talents and on a Geraldo concert, held in March 1953 at the Royal Festival Hall, one of his compositions was played with the audience being invited to submit suggestions for its title. Winner was a Mr. Aylward from Thornton Heath who came up with the name 'Delaney's Delight' and won two tickets for the next concert.

Using a pick-up group of session musicians Eric personally financed a recording of this tune, backed by a special Jack Seymour arrangement of the traditional song 'Oranges and Lemons', both capturing his unique drum sound. The result was offered to several record companies and it was Mercury who issued the disc which became an instant hit; even more so when the BBC used 'Oranges and Lemons' as signature tune for one of its disc jockey shows.

Now it was only a matter of time before Eric branched out as a bandleader with disc sales helping to finance the project. During the summer months of 1954 adverts appeared in the music press with the slogan "The big Eric Delaney Band is coming soon". This big day finally arrived on 16<sup>th</sup> September with a debut concert of his 14 piece outfit at Hull City Hall. It was touch and go though, because only a few weeks previously Eric had lost part of a finger after it was trapped while adjusting the fan belt on his car. Vocalists with the new band were Derrick Francis from Calcutta and pretty 21 year old Dawn Page from Fulham. By the end of the year Dawn had dropped out due to illness and was replaced by Marion Williams.

The band's London debut on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October 1954 was at the Coliseum Theatre and David Jacobs presented Eric with a silver disc to mark 20,000 sales of his first record. The following week his second Mercury offering, 'Truckin'' backed by another standard 'Sweet Georgia Brown', again featuring his distinctive percussion sound, was in the shops. Their radio debut came on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> December with a mid-day Light Programme show and a few months later in March 1955 they were featured on the BBC Festival of Dance Music from the Royal Albert Hall, and received the biggest ovation of the night.

While touring on one night stands disaster almost struck again one night during June, when Eric's American Mercury car was completely wrecked in a road accident with a Standard Vanguard while returning from a concert at Scarborough. During August and September the band appeared in variety, with the novel opening of Eric arriving on stage by jumping through a large paper drum skin. Several radio and TV appearances during the year led to a follow up spot on the 1956 Festival of Dance Music in April. The band also had its own six week late evening series from July that year.

After two more issues from Mercury, Eric switched to the Pye label in March 1956 where

he recorded new versions of some old favourites and a 10 inch L.P. 'Hi Fi Delaney', that when expanded to a 12 inch sold well in America. The year also saw several changes on the vocal line up, with Marion Williams, Brenda Kaye and Shelley Moore all in turn eventually giving way to Vicki Anderson. Cab Kaye, himself no stranger to bandleading, replaced Derrick Francis in the vocal ranks during 1957. Doing concerts from one end of the country to the other, Eric made full use of time on the road, using a large van bearing the band's name in bright day-glow paint. Further radio series included 'Bandwagon' shared with the Bob Miller Orchestra and singer Matt Monro from July 1957, and another with The Keynotes vocal group.

In November Eric invested £3,000 of his own cash in a bandshow presentation to tour the country's variety theatres. Kicking off at Finsbury Park Empire, it featured a mock battleship firing its own guns, a 16 ft. elephant and thousands of inflated balloons. Gene Williams replaced Cab Kaye (who had gone back to bandleading) joining Vicki Anderson in the vocal department. On the show Tommy Cairns, former drummer with the Squadronaires, took over Eric's seat at the drum kit, leaving him free to actually front the band for the first time, returning to the tymps for his solo numbers.

1958 saw the band doing a number of bookings, often a month at a time, on the Continent (another close shave touring US service camps in Germany during February, when Eric's car skidded on icy road and overturned) plus a ten week summer season at Brighton's Regent Ballroom. They continued to be featured on radio's 'Bandwagon' which spotlighted a different band each evening. But big bands and variety in general was going through a time of turmoil as rock and roll was taking over.

By the close of the fifties Eric, sensing the winds of change, decided to give it all up. He planned a solo career and even spoke of emigrating to the States. In the end he handed over the reins of the band to the musicians themselves and continued into the sixties leading a smaller unit. To show he was definitely finished with big bands, Eric advertised his whole library of arrangements in the For Sale column of 'Melody Maker'.

His new group initially comprised Kenny Salmon organ, Tony Fisher trumpet, Colin Bradfield alto sax, Peter Hutchin bass, Jim Lawless vibes with Eric on drums of course. They played a lot of one night stands, did dance hall holiday relief for Rank and were regulars on the Light Programme's 'Music With A Beat' and 'Easy Beat' series. Eric eventually returned to the recording studio for a couple of singles on Parlophone and the odd L.P.

By the early nineties, Eric almost 70 years of age and now totally bald, was still playing as well as ever. He was billed at the Blackpool Tower Ballroom as "the biggest little band". In 1994 he appeared on a radio concert featuring former Geraldo Orchestra members, as they celebrated 100 years of the Royal College of Music. Later years saw him living in Spain where he led a group at various Benidorm night spots. I believe he was still out there as recent as 2010, although by then he'd given up performing. Eric died 15<sup>th</sup>

July 2011.

Eric Delaney Band Recordings  
MERCURY

MB3143 Aug 54 'Delaney's delight / Oranges and lemons'  
MB3168 Nov 54 'Truckin` / Sweet Georgia Brown'  
MB3213 Apl 55 'Ting-a-ling / Roamin` in the gloamin`'  
MB3234 Sep 55 'Hornpipe boogie / The man I love'

PYE NIXA

N 15046 Mar 56 'Cockles and mussels / Say si-si'  
N 15054 Jun 56 'Orange and lemons / Truckin`'  
N 15069 Sep 56 'Rockin` the tymps / Ain't she sweet'  
N 15079 Jan 57 'Rock and roll King Cole / Pipe cleaner rock'  
N 15079 Feb 57 'Rock and roll King Cole / Time for chimes'

(re-issued with

new 'B' side)

N 15113 Oct 57 'Fanfare boogie / Jingle bells'

PARLOPHONE

R 4646 Apl 60 'Let's get organised / Bass drum boogie'  
R 4753 Feb 61 'Yes indeed / Drum twist'  
R 4876 62 'Sing, sing, sing / Washington blues twist'  
R 4925 62 'Manhattan spiritual / Down home'

PYE

7N15782 65 'The big beat / Big noise from Winnetka'

## Peggy DELL

Husky voiced Peggy Dell (real name Tisdell) was taught piano by her father, a musician at Dublin Empire, but she preferred to sing and at the age of 14 was promoting sheet music in her local Woolworth store, singing the popular songs on sale.

A year later she had formed her own band playing piano and supplying vocals. The band became regulars at Fuller's Cafe in Dublin. Peggy next joined Charlie Harvey's band at the Capital Cinema.

In 1932 she was booked for a tour of London and provincial Astoria cinemas as a solo piano-vocal act. During the tour she was spotted by Roy Fox and he engaged her to work with his band. Peggy sang and played piano with the Roy Fox Band until 1935 when she left to join Jack Hylton as vocalist on a tour of America staying with Hylton until 1939. She recorded with both bands.

Peggy spent the war years back in her native Ireland, where she made several broadcasts and formed a female choir, The Sweet and Swing Chorines. Issy Bonn heard them and booked the act to appear in his new stage show 'Any Minute Now'. This brought Peggy back to Britain in 1946, opening at Hackney Empire on 2nd December.

By the late forties Peggy was touring solo in variety as a vocal - piano - clavioline act with great success. At the end of the decade Peggy formed a small band, resident at Dublin's Porthmarnock Hotel, where she remained at least until the mid fifties.

I believe Peggy Dell's only recordings are pre-war, although there was a Talisman LP 'I Shall Always Remember' (STAL 1943) with Jack Hylton's Orchestra, that was issued in Eire.

## Elaine DELMAR

In 1959 Elaine, the 20 year old daughter of bandleader Leslie 'Jiver' Hutchinson, was a regular vocalist on A.T.V's 'Sunday Serenade'. A cabaret performer at home and abroad, she recorded for several labels, beginning with Fontana in 1959. Being really a jazz singer, Elaine's discs made little impact chartwise and when one was played on T.V's 'Juke Box Jury' in March 1963, not one of the panel had heard of her, but they liked the record.

Born 13<sup>th</sup> September 1939 at Harpenden north of London, she made her radio debut at the age of 13 playing piano on Children's Hour. During much of her teens she appeared as vocalist with her father's band on the many concerts he played at U.S. Air Force bases across southern England. During the sixties and seventies Elaine often turned up on radio and T.V. and played numerous roles in stage musicals in London and on Broadway. During the eighties and nineties she toured in a string of composer tribute shows; 'Swinging on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue' with Georgie Fame; 'Let's do it', 'Hooray for Hollywood' and 'Thank you Mr. Gershwin' with Paul Jones. Many of these shows were replayed on several visits she made to New Zealand. Elaine has also appeared in legit theatre on the London stage.

During April 1994 she sang 'In a sentimental mood' at a memorial service for Adelaide Hall, held at St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden. Still busy touring, much of her work is now aboard luxury cruise liners.

Although Elaine's early single recordings may not have set the charts alight, her long list of album and CD titles since, indicate a loyal and growing following.

Elaine Delmar Recordings  
FONTANA

H 227 Nov 59 'I loves you Porgy / Porgy'  
H 241 Feb 60 'That old feeling / I must have that man'

DECCA

F 11337 Mar 61 'The earth turns over / Back of the moon'

COLUMBIA

DB 4993 Apl 63 'No more blues / Yours'  
DB 7101 Sep 63 'Amor amor / Hum drum blues'

C.B.S.

3191 67 'What love can do / Too much loneliness'  
3641 68 'Sneakin` up on you / Very slowly'  
3876 68 'When I learn to love again / Shadow of the evening'  
4017 69 'Those were the days / Why can't I go to him'  
4408 Jly 69 'The world is ours / The rhythm of life'

S 4770 Feb 70 'Every little living dream / The staying kind'  
S 5329 Dec 70 'Hurt so bad / The train'

M.C.A.

MU 1216 73 'Desparado / Never can say goodbye'

E.M.I.

EMI 2648 77 'I've got the world on a string / Honeysuckle rose'

## Terry DENE

Not a bad singer with every chance of long term success, it was Terry's unpredictable temperament that proved to be his downfall. Called everything from talented, modest, likeable lad to screwball cry baby, there was certainly a bit of them all in Terry Dene, his biggest problem being that he was just unable to handle fame.

Born Terence Williams on 20th December 1938, he said he borrowed his stage name from the Dean Holiday Camp that he enjoyed visiting as a boy. In those youthful days he was living at Hunter Buildings, Southwark south London.

Terry, a tall slim lad and a keen cyclist, began airing his tonsils in the school choir. After leaving school he went to work as a packer in H.M.V's Oxford Street record store. At a staff Christmas party he did some impersonations of Elvis that became the hit of the evening and he was persuaded to make a private recording. This he sent to Ray Martin at Columbia Records but it was returned with a polite refusal.

Undeterred, Terry secured some evening gigs singing with Rory Blackwell and the Blackjacks and eventually he appeared at Soho's notorious Two I's coffee bar. Owner Paul Lincoln thought Terry had promise and became his manager. Soon he was making his first professional stage appearance, a Sunday concert on 31st March 1957 at Romford Odeon in a package show promoted by Lincoln that included Nancy Whiskey, The Chas. McDevitt Skiffle Group, Bobby Breen's Rockers and Rory Blackwell's Blackjacks. On Wednesday 10th April Terry was part of the entertainment between bouts of a wrestling tournament held at the Royal Albert Hall. Noticed by a B.B.C producer he was signed for a spot on 'Six Five Special', appearing on Saturday 27th April.

Soon being hailed as 'the new Tommy Steele' (the original had not long arrived!) Decca Records moved in where Columbia had feared to tread. As Decca already had the aforementioned Steele, billed as 'Britain's first rocker', on their books they tended to steer Terry towards more downbeat material. His first disc, covering Marty Robbins' big US hit 'A white sports coat', was out in May and tended to justify their investment by reaching No.18 on the charts, although it was still a dozen places behind The King Brothers' version. His second record, a cover of Sal Mineo's 'Start movin'', also made it coming one place ahead of the American at No.15.

With 'White sport coat' riding high, Terry was quickly elevated to stardom and, with his

Dean Aces backing group, began a top of the bill variety tour on Monday 24th June at Middlesbrough Empire. Touring the country, the success of his second disc pushed him higher up the ladder of popularity, bringing more exposure on television.

But it wasn't long before the cracks began to show, Terry was basically a shy person and found it difficult to handle all the screaming fans and constant attention. Still only 18 and possibly a little immature (he admitted that before fame came he never had the money to go anywhere and was a bit of a loner) he let a drinking binge get the better of him. This resulted in a fine of £2 by London magistrates on a charge of being drunk and disorderly. Terry was very repentant and promised the magistrate he would "sign the pledge", before rushing off to appear at Oldham Empire.

That pledge was short lived for only two months later in February 1958 he was arrested at Gloucester (where he was appearing at the Regal), caught smashing windows after another drinking session. This time the fine was £155. The papers had a field day citing the episode as an example of "the evils of rock and roll". "The amazing bubble of success has burst" said the Daily Express, adding "these purveyors of the rowdy world of new music haven't the toughness of the old variety stars and Dene is probably only the first of many to crack up" (how many times has something similar been said since?). Ordered to take psychiatric treatment he was replaced on the remaining dates of his current tour by Marty Wilde. Later, newcomer Bill Kent was brought in to front the Dean Aces, but a proposed tour of South Africa was cancelled by the promoter.

All this bad publicity must have been something of a headache for the producers of 'The Golden Disc', a movie telling the story of an unknown singer's rise to fame with Terry playing lead role. As it turned out the West End premiere at the Rialto Cinema, Coventry Street on 20th March 1958 went well with reviews praising Dene for his acting ability "natural when others looked ill at ease".

No doubt encouraged by this Terry returned to the stage on a Spastics Society charity concert at the Empress Hall on Sunday 30th March. This time he wore a suit instead of jeans, with shorter hair, no guitar and no backing group. Coming on stage, a reporter said he looked worried and nervous, but the audience of over 6,000 gave him some of the loudest applause of the show. He was backed by the Orchestra of Cyril Stapleton and Cyril introduced him as "a young man who's had one of the stormiest careers ever" (big applause) and he sang several songs from the film leaving the stage to more applause "that seemed to bewilder him".

On 22 April Terry appeared at the Royal Festival Hall in the B.B.C's annual 'Festival of Dance Music', three days later he was on T.V's 'Show Band Show' and on the 30th, 'Palais Party' with Lou Preager's Orchestra. It appeared all was forgiven and Terry Dene was back on course. A ten week Moss Empire tour that began at Nottingham Empire also featured singer Edna Savage who'd been with him that fateful day in Gloucester. Terry and Edna by now were being

romantically linked (although both denied it). By June it was official and they married, after what the papers called "a whirlwind romance", on 8th July 1958 at Marylebone Register Office.

Now one would think everything was perfect, Terry's latest disc 'Stairway of love' was another chart success, so what could go wrong?. But there was already another cloud on the horizon. He had received his National Service call up papers earlier in the year and was trying to negotiate a deferment. One deadline had already passed and everything depended on a medical. Many commentators assumed he would be graded unfit, but by September the results were that he'd passed A1 for entry into the King's Royal Rifle Corps. Terry was granted a further short deferment to complete his current bookings, which included Christmas Day on I.T.V in 'Max Bygraves Entertains' with Alma Cogan and Lita Roza.

There is no doubt that Terry was not happy to be joining Her Majesty's Army, but any chance of doing it quietly was dashed by the press presence. The event even made Parliament, when Forces Minister Christopher Soames announced to the house "that special facilities had been given for the press to see Mr. Williams (his real name was used) arrive". Many papers did their best to discredit him, bringing up his past "emotionally unstable behaviour" and exclaiming his unsuitability for service life.

With this sort of encouragement it's not surprising Terry soon proved them right. He broke down during basic training, entered hospital for observation and was declared unfit for service, leaving on Friday 27th March 1959, less than two months after joining. Some headlines branded him a coward, comparing him unfavourably with Elvis Presley whose own army service generated nothing but good publicity (no doubt what the War Office hoped for here).

Attempting to pick up his career, Terry appeared on 'Drumbeat' on Saturday 25th April and the next day began a series of one night stands at Derby. Here he met some jeers and a few slogans proclaiming "we don't want Dene", but on the night (an extra 20 security staff were brought in) there were more shrieks than boos and he went away saying it was great to be back.

His May 1959 Decca release was the somewhat apt coupling 'There's no fool like a young fool' with 'I've come of age'. "A first class disc delivered as if he didn't have a worry in the world" said Disc magazine. But worries he did have, the big agencies wouldn't touch him and what bookings he did get (mainly from Larry Parnes beat shows) were low down billings, supporting singers like Billy Fury.

Through all his problems his wife Edna Savage had supported him, but eventually even this marriage broke up. Terry played dates abroad, did some low paying dance hall tours and some Sunday concerts. But slowly he became less heard of, only to reappear during the latter sixties as a born again Christian and evangelist. He spent the early seventies living in Sweden more or less forgotten. He attempted a late seventies comeback after the issue of a book and album titled 'I Thought Terry Dene Was Dead' and toured with a reformed Dean Aces for

a while. Basically a good guy, he seemed to get all the bad breaks, most of them of his own making

Terry Dene Recordings

DECCA Group)	(acc on most by Malcolm Lockyer
F 10895 May 57	'A white sports coat / The man in the phone booth'
F 10914 Jly 57	'Start movin' / Green corn'
F 10938 Sep 57	'Teenage dream / Come and get it'
F 10964 Nov 57	'Lucky, lucky Bobby / Baby, she's gone'
F 10977 Jan 58	'The golden age / C'min and be loved'
F 11016 May 58	'Stairway of love / Love, lover'
F 11037 Jun 58	'Seven steps of love / Can I walk you home'
F 11076 Oct 58	'Pretty little pearly / Who baby who'
F 11100 Jan 59	'I've got a good thing going / Bimbombey'
F 11136 May 59	'There's no fool like a young fool / I've come of age'
F 11154 Aug 59	'A boy without a girl / Thank you pretty baby'

ORIOLE

CB 1562 Aug 60	'Geraldine / Love me or leave me'
CB 1594 Feb 61	'Next stop paradise / Like a baby'

ARAL

PS 107	63 'The feminine look / Fever'
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LOGO

GO 412	82 'Paralysed / Lorna'
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## Johnny DENIS

From pre-war days guitarist Johnny Denis had led swing, country and novelty groups and began recording with Decca during the early forties. He was often to be heard leading his Sextet on radio's 'Music While You Work' and 'Variety Bandbox'. His Novelty Sextet worked mainly clubs and hotels, while Johnny and vocalist Billie Campbell often appeared as a double act around London theatres.

When some of his recordings with a country flavour were issued on the London label in America they were credited as Sheriff Johnny Denis and his Ranchers, and he adopted the name and style almost exclusively at home from about 1948.

As such, the group became a regular feature on Zetters' Football Pools show 'Miniature Music Hall' on Radio Luxembourg and also the BBC's 'Way Out West'. The latter was originally intended as a short series of five programmes, but became so popular they made about thirty.

Successful on stage and radio, The Ranchers' line up consisted of Johnny playing several guitars and providing lead vocal, with Wilf Edwards violin, mouth-organ and arranger, Peter Crawford accordion, drums and piano, Desmond Maloney clarinet and tenor sax, Ivor Raymond piano and electric accordion, Pete Huggett bass and Sam Prager drums. Singer was Netta Rogers with yodeller Norman Harper



and The Cactus Kids (Eileen Marshall - Alma Strugnall - Kay Marshall).

They toured extensively around this country's numerous theatres and music halls, so popular in those pre-television (to most people) days, and worked several West End clubs including Fischer's.

The lads continued to top music hall bills on stage and radio into the early fifties.

# Johnny Denis Recordings DECCA *Johnny Denis Novelty Swing Quartet*

F 8374 Dec 43 'Pedro the fisherman (v. *Johnny Denis*) /  
(both v. *J.D*)  
F 8404 Feb 44 'My, my ain't that somthin' /  
Pistol packin' mama  
(both v. *J.D*)  
F 8427 May 44 'Skirts / Pocket full of pennies (both v. *J.D*)  
F 8446 Aug 44 'Featherhead (v. *J.D*) /  
It's love love  
(v. *trio*)  
F 8496 Jan 45 'Tico tico / Dance with a dolly (both v. *J.D*)  
F 8540 Aug 45 (*N S Quintet*) 'The whistler's song /  
She broke  
my heart in three places  
(both v. *J.D*)  
F 8566 Oct 45 (*J D Novelty Swingtet*) 'Dream /  
Chewing a piece of straw  
(both v. *J.D*)  
F 8624 May 46 'Casey the pride of them all / Along  
the Navajo  
trail (both v. *J.D & Billy Campbell*)

## *Johnny Denis Novelty Swing Sextet*

F 8706 Nov 46 'And then it's heaven (v. *J.D & Billy Campbell*)  
/ Getting  
nowhere (v. *J.D*)  
F 8730 Jan 47 'Gotta get me somebody to love (v. *J.D & B.C*) /  
Ole buttermilk sky  
(v. *J.D.*)  
F 8770 May 47 'Beside the railroad /  
More fish in the sea (both v. *J.D & B.C*)

## *Johnny Denis and his Ranchers*

F 8831 Jan 48 'Down in dreamy valley / My pretty  
girl  
(both v. *J.D*)  
F 8844 Feb 48 'I'm happy right here /  
The shoemaker's  
serenade'  
F 8874 May 48 'Twenty five chickens, thirty five cows  
/  
Worry, worry, worry  
(both v. *J.D*)  
F 8888 June 48 (*with Primo Scala Accordions*) 'Helen  
polka /  
Toolie oolie  
doolie'  
F 9019 Nov 48 (*J D Novelty Swing Quartet*)  
'Foolin' /  
Pass the biscuits  
Miranda'  
F 9062 Jan 49 'The yellow rose of Texas / Wait for  
the wagon'  
F 9085 Feb 49 'A gay ranchero (v. *quartet*) /

Whistling Johnny

(v. *J.D*)  
F 9117 Mar 49 'More fish in the sea / Four lovely  
letters  
(both v. *The Cactus Kids*)  
F 9124 May 49 'Careless hands / Old pardners (both  
v. *C.K*)  
F 9183 Jly 49 'The gaucho serenade / Goin' to the  
barn  
dance tonight'  
F 9373 Mar 50 'Dear hearts and gentle people / I  
didn't know  
the gun was loaded  
(both v. *C.K*)  
F 9397 May 50 'Quicksilver / Copper canyon'  
F 9462 Jly 50 'A load of hay / Pony express'  
F 9472 Aug 50 'Three wheels on the wagon (v. *J.D & Netta Rogers*) / Don't eat  
biscuits in bed'  
F 9494 Oct 50 'Down where the rainbow ends /  
Buffalo Billy'  
F 9710 Jun 51 'Kentucky waltz / I'll be alone'  
F 9711 Jun 51 'Mr. and Mississippi / Satins and  
lace'  
F 9868 Feb 52 'Somebody stole my horse and  
wagon /  
The old  
square dance'  
F 9877 Mar 52 'The phantom pianist / Dry your eyes  
Annabella'  
F 9952 Jly 52 'Mountain laurel / River of gold'  
F 10004 Nov 52 'You're gonna be sorry / Tennessee  
warbler'  
F 10020 Dec 52 'Don't trade your love for gold /  
Needles and pins'  
F 10103 May 53 'No help wanted / Kaw-liga'

## **Hermanos DENIZ**

Formed and led by guitarist Frank Deniz, aided by his brothers Joe and Laurie, the Hermanos Deniz Cuban Rhythm Band for several years after the war were resident at London's Coconut Grove night spot. All three had been professional musicians before forming the band in 1945. .

Despite their exotic sounding name (Hermanos is Spanish for brothers) the three brothers and their sister Maria were born in Wales. Their father, himself a musician, was a native of the Portuguese speaking Cape Verde islands, but work as a merchant seaman brought him to Cardiff where he married a local girl and settled down.

Frank, the eldest born 31<sup>st</sup> July 1912, followed in his father's footsteps by joining the navy, but eventually gave up in favour of music playing violin, banjo and guitar. He then married Clair a professional pianist and around the late thirties moved to London. Here he gigged around working for several bands including Ken 'Snakehips' Johnson, Harry Roy, Edmundo Ros and Eric Winstone.

Joe, born 1913, had played guitar in the all black bands of Ken Johnson and Jiver Hutchinson, moving on to several groups including Johnny Claes and the Harry Parry Sextet.

During the war Frank returned to the sea where he managed to get torpedoed but survived. Back in Britain he formed his Spirits of

Rhythm group that included wife Clair and his brother Joe. The band recorded for Decca early 1944 and appeared at that year's Jazz Jamboree.

When, in 1945, London's Coconut Grove restaurant needed a new Hawaiian group Frank and Joe were joined by brother Laurie and the Hermanos Deniz Cuban Rhythm band was formed. By 1947 Laurie had left the group to become a member of the Ray Ellington Quartet. In 1949 Hermanos Deniz moved to Grosvenor House, playing alongside Sidney Lipton's Orchestra. During the fifties, with growing public interest in Latin American music, they often turned up on radio, being regulars on 'Band Parade', 'Rhythm in the Sun' and 'Latin American Ballroom'. By the late fifties the band had moved on again, to the new 'Talk of the Town' theatre restaurant.

Finding the music of the sixties rather hostile the band broke up, but the brothers continued to freelance. Frank and Clare went to live in Spain, but eventually returned to Herefordshire. Having outlived both his brothers and his wife, he died there in 17<sup>th</sup> July 2005 aged 92, survived by two daughters, one of them a gifted professional cellist.

Hermanos Deniz recorded for Melodisc, including at least one L.P. and Frank Deniz also recorded with his 'Spirits of Rhythm' group.

Hermanos Deniz Recordings

DECCA (Frank Deniz *Spirits of Rhythm*)

F 8456 Jly 44 'When I grow too old to dream / Soft winds'

MELODISC (*Hermanos Deniz Cuban Rhythm Band*)

1397 56 'Angel may care / La comparsa'

## Denny DENNIS

By the time the 1950's arrived Denny's heyday as a vocalist was on the wane, although he continued to make records well into that decade.

Born Ronald Dennis Pountain on 1st November 1913 at Derby, he wasn't too keen on being called Ron and so used his middle name from an early age. On leaving school he went to work as an apprentice electrician with the L.M.S. Railway Company.

Having taught himself to play drums he took over from his elder brother in the local amateur New Mayfair Dance Band and when they entered a 'Melody Maker' contest Denny added a vocal chorus, which so impressed the judges (even though this was a band contest) that Percy Mathison Brooks, editor of the paper, recommended him to band leader Roy Fox. Roy later auditioned Denny, told him he had promise, but advised him to get more vocal experience.

So back in Derby with the New Mayfair Band, Denny continued to put more emphasis on the vocals and about a year later, again with help from the 'Melody Maker', secured a position as drummer - vocalist with Freddie Bretherton and his band at the Spiders Webb Roadhouse, a popular haunt for show-business people and visiting celebrities near Watford, north of

London.

This was early 1933 and it wasn't long before Jack Jackson heard Denny sing, used him on one of his band's broadcasts and as vocalist for three songs the band recorded for H.M.V at the end of August. So in just a few months Denny had gone from being a railway electrician, to becoming a professional singer, with a first broadcast and first record.

Bolstered by his new confidence he again went to see Roy Fox and was soon part of that popular band, making his first record with them in December 1933. It was Roy who suggested he change his name from Dennis Pountain to Denny Dennis and as such for many years he became one of the main attractions of the Roy Fox Band on stage, radio and recording studio. Denny stayed with Roy until the band broke up in 1938.

He then had about a year with Ambrose before joining the broadcasting band led by Billy Ternent at the B.B.C. studios in Bristol. Here Denny was on air several times each week and in 1940 was voted top male vocalist in a 'Melody Maker' readers' poll.

The same year Denny joined the Air Force and was posted to R.A.F Mildenhall where he joined an entertainment unit led by Cpl. Cyril Stapleton. The next five years were spent touring service camps at home and abroad (including Iceland) giving concerts for the troops. He also broadcast on service shows like 'Stage Door Canteen' and 'All Join In'.

Back in civvy street Denny, in 1946, jointly with Benny Lee was again voted top male vocalist. He did a residency with the B.B.C. Variety Orchestra in London and toured in a double act with Paula Green.

During the war years Denny had made a number of solo recordings for Decca and this continued after the war. Many were released in America on the London label, several doing quite well there, notably 'It's the bluest kind of blues my baby sings'. Indication that the Denny voice had impressed even the most critical ears came when in 1948 he was invited to cross the Atlantic and join the great Tommy Dorsey Band.

Arriving at the end of March, Denny did almost a dozen promotional broadcasts in his first 18 hours on U.S. soil. He then joined Tommy aboard his yacht at Miami, before going to work on tour with the band from 1st April 1948. It was a gruelling schedule, doubly so for Denny as he not only had to learn new songs but had to catch up on all the band's standard numbers. This meant almost continual night and day rehearsals, concerts and broadcasts. Because of a union dispute at the time, only a few commercial recordings were made during Denny's time in the States.

After an enjoyable and very successful year with Dorsey (he came high up several U.S. popularity polls) Denny, partly because of domestic pressures at home, returned to Britain. He arrived back at Southampton on the liner Queen Elizabeth on Saturday 2nd April 1949 and was soon back on radio, on Geraldo's 'Hit Parade' on 12th and 19th April. He was also on the Easter Sunday broadcast of 'Variety Hall of Fame' with Tommy Trinder, Margaret Lockwood, Bruce Trent, Celia Lipton and Ted Heath's Music, on the 17th. He joined Ted again on one

of the band's Swing Sessions at the London Palladium on Sunday 1st May.

Further radio included a series with the Leslie Baker Orchestra and Denny made a number of concert and ballroom appearances. But bookings were not easy to come by, times were changing, and the big dance bands were a dying breed, so he turned to variety.

Early in 1950 he teamed up with a new vocal-instrumental group The Frazer Hayes Quartet in a variety package that for over a year toured the halls and theatres that were the life blood of performers in those pre-television days.

The fifties, for Denny, was a decade of taking whatever bookings were available. A radio series 'Hi Neighbour' with The Tanner sisters and Sid Phillips Orchestra, plus spots on Show Band broadcasts. He did a few concerts for his old boss Roy Fox and his new band. From December 1951 until May 1954 Denny toured with the Sid Phillips Band doing one night stands all around the country. This he followed with hotel and club work and a few summer seasons.

During 1957 Denny even appeared as Bing Crosby in the touring 'Disc Doubles' package. On radio in January 1957 he presented 'The Sentimental Gentleman of Swing', a tribute to another old boss, Tommy Dorsey, who had died the previous November.

On disc his Decca contract had ended in late 1949 and it was quite a while before he recorded again. This happened when he joined the Sid Phillips band on a number of H.M.V. sessions. He is reported as being heard humming the tune on Bill McGuffie's Philips recording of the 1956 hit song 'No other love'. But it was on the budget Embassy label from Woolworth's that Denny returned to full time recording, in 1956, covering the popular hits of singers like Perry Como and Eddie Fisher. He also did 'Cool water' for a Top Hits of the Month Club L.P. with Harry Leader's Band.

During the sixties Denny gave up show business and was for a time a clerk in a paper mill, before becoming 'mine host' of the Station Hotel, Howden, North Humberside, where he put to good use all that vocal talent entertaining his customers. So much so, that in 1971 he was encouraged to return to regular club work enjoying considerable success in and around the Hull area.

By the 1980's Denny was happily and actively retired and living alone in a bungalow on the Cumbrian coast (he had survived two marriages and an equal number of divorces). In 1991 a revival fan club The Denny Dennis Music Society was formed by long-time admirers and he co-operated in the writing of his life story. Sadly Denny died on 2nd November 1993 shortly after receiving a special award for his services to music from the British Academy of Song Writers.

#### Denny Dennis Recordings (*not complete*) REX

9536	39	'Tears on my pillow / ?'
9631	39	'You grow sweeter as the years go by / ?'
9733	Feb 40	'Goodnight my beautiful / Where or when'
9738	Mar 40	'It's a lovely day tomorrow / Rosita'

9803	Jun 40	'If I should fall in love again / Serenade of Napoli'
9809	Jun 40	'When I dream of home / Don't you ever cry'
9827	Jly 40	'Stardust / Just one more chance'
9863	Oct 40	'Without a song / Sweet and lovely'
9879	Nov 40	'Smoke gets in your eyes / I surrender dear'
9899	Dec 40	'Only forever / Sierra Sue'
9918	Jan 41	'My romance / Weep no more'
10001	Jun 41	'Dolores / Amapola'
10051	Oct 41	'Russian rose / Just a little cottage'
10082	Nov 41	'I don't want to set the world on fire / Lights out'
		'till reveille'
10133	Jly 42	'In old Mexico / How green was my valley'

#### DECCA

F 8361	Nov 43	'I'm mad at myself / If you please' ( <i>acc by Jay</i> )
		<i>Wilbur Orch</i>
F 8408	Mar 44	'The wishing waltz / Moonlight mood'
F 8435	Jun 44	'A lovely way to spend an evening / The music stopped' ( <i>acc by Art</i> )
		<i>Strauss Orch</i>
F 8481	Nov 44	'You were right / How blue the night' ( <i>acc by Art</i> )
		<i>Strauss Orch</i>
F 8516	Apl 45	'You're so sweet to remember / A kiss in the night' ( <i>acc by Paul</i> )
		<i>Fenoulhet Orch</i>
F 8553	Sep 45	'There's no you / How little we know' ( <i>acc by Phil</i> )
		<i>Green Orch</i>
F 8573	Nov 45	'I'll always be with you / There must be a way' ( <i>acc by Stanley</i> )
		<i>Black Orch</i>
F 8603	Apl 46	'Some Sunday morning / I dream of you' ( <i>acc by Stanley</i> )
		<i>Black Orch</i>
F 8638	Jly 46	'It's a beautiful day / Mary Lou' ( <i>acc by PGO</i> )
F 8694	Oct 46	'It's the bluest kind of blues my baby sings / Make believe world' ( <i>acc by SBO</i> )
F 8726	Feb 47	'Is it too late / You haven't changed' ( <i>acc by Stanley</i> )
		<i>Black Orch</i>
F 8774	Feb 47	( <i>with The Squadronaires</i> ) 'That's the beginning of the end'
F 8792	Sep 47	" " 'Temptation'
F 8810	Oct 47	'Chi-baba chi-baba' ( <i>with The Song Pedlars</i> ) / Danger ahead' ( <i>acc by Bob</i> )
		<i>Farnon Orch</i>
F 8833	Jan 48	'But beautiful / Honey' ( <i>acc by SBO</i> )
F 8873	May 48	'Glen Echo / If you ever need a friend' ( <i>acc by Bob</i> )
		<i>Farnon Orch</i>
F 8889	Jun 48	'After all' ( <i>acc by BFO</i> ) / I'd give a million tomorrows' ( <i>with The Keynotes</i> )
		& inst acc'
F 8915	Jly 48	'I'd love to see you home tonight / Her father and mother were Irish' ( <i>acc by BFO</i> )
F 8940	Aug 48	'In between the showers / Love me' "

F 9041 Dec 48 'A fella with an umbrella / Steppin` out with  
my baby' (with *The Song Pedlars & rhythm acc*)  
F 9079 Feb 49 'Judaline (acc by BFO) / Need I say (with *The Black Orch*)'  
F 9107 Mar 49 'Santa Catalina (acc by Stanley Black orch) /  
Blue shadows on the trail (with *The Keynotes*  
&  
rhythm acc')  
F 9184 Jly 49 'Every time I meet you / By the way' (acc by Bob)  
*Farnon Orch*  
F 9218 Sep 49 'The four winds and the seven seas / My golden baby (with *The Keynotes*)'  
(acc by Stanley Black Orch)  
F 9220 Oct 49 'Bolero / I'll always love you (with *Keynotes*)'  
(acc by Stanley Black Orch)  
F 9232 Oct 49 'Just a rose in a garden of weeds (acc by SBO) /  
I'm feeling low (acc by SB piano)  
H.M.V.  
BD 1243 May 49 (with *Tommy Dorsey orch*) 'While the Angelus  
was ringing / Down by the station (with  
*Lucy-Ann Polk & The Sentimentalists*)'  
(all the following H.M.V.'s are with the Sid Phillips Band)  
BD 6119 Jan 52 'Down the trail of achin` hearts / Detour'  
BD 6122 Feb 52 'I hear the bluebells ring / Just one more time'  
BD 6125 Mar 52 'Skip to my Lou'  
BD 6128 Apr 52 'Grand Central station /  
Be my life`s companion'  
BD 6132 Jun 52 'The blacksmiths blues / Rhythm rag'  
BD 6133 Jly 52 'Goody goody'  
BD 6134 Aug 52 'Sugar bush / Didja ever'  
BD 6135 Sep 52 'Raminay'  
BD 6136 Oct 52 'Did you ever see a dream walking / Walkin` to Missouri'  
BD 6138 Dec 52 'Blackberry boogie / If n (with *Alma Cogan*)'  
BD 6139 Dec 52 'Bruce and the spider / You`re gonna be sorry'  
BD 6141 Jun 53 'Black cat rag'  
BD 6144 Jun 53 'My-na shay-na (with *The Greene Sisters*)'  
BD 6148 Sep 53 'Free home demonstration / Without a memory'  
EMBASSY  
WB 167 Feb 56 'Memories are made of this / The tender trap'  
WB 181 Apr 56 'Little child / You can`t be true to two'  
WB 194 Jly 56 'The wayward wind / How little we know'  
WB 198 Sep 56 'Love me as though there was no tomorrow /  
Sweet heartaches'  
WB 213 Nov 56 'Cindy oh Cindy / Lullaby of Birdland'

(acc by Ken  
*Jones orch*)  
WB 237 May 57 'Why baby why / Round and round'  
WB 248 Aug 57 'In the middle of an island / Bye bye love'  
(acc by Ken  
*Jones orch*)  
WB 255 Oct 57 'Let me be loved / Build your love' (acc by  
*Johnny*  
*Gregory orch*)  
WB 273 Feb 58 'Magic moments / Love me forever' (acc by  
Ken  
*Jones orch*)  
WB 291 Jly 58 'Sugar moon / Return to me' (acc by KJO)

## Jackie DENNIS

Wearing his kilt and still just a wee bairn, Jackie Dennis bounced easily into the 1958 hit parade with his first disc 'La dee dah'.

Born on 8th October 1942 at Edinburgh, Jackie began singing in school concerts and charity shows. During December 1957 he appeared on a show at Prestwick American Air Force Base. Also on the bill were comedians Mike & Bernie Winters and they were impressed enough with young Jackie to recommend him to their agent Evelyn Taylor. She took him under her wing and by the beginning of March, 'Lah dee dah' was in the shops. Within three weeks it had reached No.4 position in the charts. Jackie`s June cover of Sheb Wooley`s 'Purple people eater' joined the original in the charts here and became a No.1 hit in South Africa!

Over the following months Jackie appeared on several editions of 'Six Five Special', 'Top Tune Time' and was on the 100th 'Cool For Cats' on Friday 2nd May. Booked by Harold Fielding, he was on tour in variety by June described as "a fireball who whirls crazily around the stage building up excitement, creating bedlam". During August there were full house signs when he appeared at his home town Empire Theatre. Elder sister Margaret, who was in hospital, was allowed out to see him.

In October Jackie visited the States to promote his latest disc 'For the first time' ('More than ever' over here) and appeared on Perry Como`s T.V show, later shown in Britain by the B.B.C. A hectic year for Jackie ended as he played in his first panto, 'Babes In The Wood' with Jack Radcliffe and Sally Logan at Edinburgh Empire.

In those late fifties rock and roll years singers came and went with regularity and so it was with Jackie Dennis. His meteoric rise during 1958 was almost matched by the way people forgot him again. Decca tired of him too, leaving Top Rank to take over. He continued to play variety during the early months of 1959 but then disappeared, finding bookings easier on the Continent. By the end of the year he was back but his style had modified, a lot of the rock `n` roll was out and instead he included tributes to the likes of Judy Garland and impersonations of Johnnie Ray and Jerry Lewis.

In 1962 Jackie, now managed by Josef Locke`s former manager Paddy Lundon, reappeared again, this time in Ireland where he

played concerts and had a series on Telefis Eireann. He went on to play clubs at home and abroad.

Jackie Dennis Recordings

DECCA

F 10992 Mar 58 'La dee dah / You're the greatest' (acc by Harry Robinson orch)

F 11011 Apl 58 'My dream / Miss Valerie' (acc by HRO)

F 11033 Jun 58 'The purple people eater / You-oo'

F 11060 Sep 58 'More than ever / Linton Addie'

F 11090 Nov 58 'Lucky ladybug / Gingerbread' (acc by Harry Robinson orch)

TOP RANK

JAR 129 May 59 'Summer snow / Night bird'

## Lorrae DESMOND

A girl from the real outback, the early years of her life found Lorrae living almost in the Australian bush-land at Pioneer Street, Mittagong, New South Wales. Eventually it was the closeness of the flames, a regular occurrence among the vegetation, which finally persuaded the Desmond family to move into Sydney. Lorrae was certainly a girl able to look after herself, having lived for a spell in a self built hut on the Great Barrier Reef, surviving off natural resources.

In Sydney life was more civilised and she trained as a hairdresser. Lorrae had a full range voice and had won competitions as a straight soprano, but discovered more people took notice when she came down an octave and sang pop songs. Soon she was getting the odd cabaret and radio booking and when she landed the position of vocalist at Sydney's Celebrity Club, hairdressing went 'on hold'. After about a year at the club she felt confident enough to do as many other Australian artists had done before her, and set sail for England. This was 1952 and Lorrae was twenty.

Work here wasn't too easy to come by, but she did cabaret in small clubs often working two or three at the same time to make a living, plus the odd variety booking in smaller theatres. In March 1953 she joined Wally Carr and Carmel Quinn singing with the Ambrose Orchestra, but this only lasted a few months and then it was back to club work. While working with Ambrose her path crossed that of comedian Terry-Thomas and he noted her ample voice range. Later, in 1954, Terry asked her to join his touring show, partnering him in a comedy sketch mimicing Anne Zeigler and Webster Booth singing the Johnnie Ray hit 'Such a night'. She also worked with Terry on several broadcast dates.

Lorrae appeared on record here as early as February 1953, singing 'Mommy's little angel' and 'Puppy love', a disc that obviously made little impact because H.M.V. didn't repeat the exercise. It was left to Bunny Lewis, promotions man with Decca, who heard her singing on the radio, to put her back on record in September 1954 with 'Hold my hand' as featured in the Debbie Reynolds film 'Susan Slept Here'. A

popular song for many singers it was a number one hit on both sides of the Atlantic for Don Cornell.

Other Decca discs soon followed, 'No one but you' in October (although it's almost impossible to recall this song without 'hearing' Billy Eckstine singing it), and then two that became more associated with Alma Cogan, 'I can't tell a waltz from a tango' and 'Where will the dimple be'. No wonder that in May 1955 she was 'Heartbroken', as someone else always had the hit with her songs.

Even though many of her Decca releases sold well, and despite having a good voice and being a lovely to look at ash blonde, Lorrae never reached the 'big star' status she strived for. Those looks however did help to get her a fair share of television work as the years rolled by, including her own 'Meet Lorrae Desmond' series for the BBC in 1956. She also had a small part in the 1955 film 'Stock Car' that featured ex-Heath singer Paul Carpenter as a racing driver. This was a film more memorable for action on the track than any in the plot.

The mid-fifties years were a mixture of variety and club bookings for Lorrae, plus several troop concert tours overseas. She did Malta with Harry Secombe, then Kenya with Terry-Thomas. During 1956 as well as her own TV shows, she did several of the 'Strictly T.T.' series with Terry where she continued to demonstrate her keen sense of fun. There were also many appearances on pop music TV shows, and she continued to wave her national flag by regularly representing Australia on radio's 'Commonwealth of Song'. In December 1956 Lorrae played her first pantomime, as Prince Charming to singer Edna Savage's Cinderella for a short season at both the York Rialto and Gloucester Regal theatres. The two girls did it all over again in 1957 at the Stockton Globe and Hull Regal.

In February 1957 now with Parlophone Records, she jumped on the rock 'n' roll bandwagon with her 'You won't be around', featuring a backing from The Rebels vocal group. This set the trend for her other Parlophone releases, but still she never achieved that big hit record.

During both 1957 and 1958 Lorrae was a member of the cast of the radio series 'Mr. Bentley and Mr. Braden', joining in the comedy routines with Dick Bentley and Bernard Braden and once again proving she was more than 'just a pop singer'.

Looking for more challenging roles, from May 1958 she co-starred with Jacqueline Mackenzie in a new BBC TV situation comedy series 'Them Girls', which explored the adventures of two bachelor girls sharing a flat.

Continuing to work the variety stage, she toured with American star Paul Anka when he came to Britain during 1958, played Dandini in 'Cinderella' at Chester's Royalty Theatre and did a summer season in 1959 at the Great Yarmouth Royal Aquarium with Lonnie Donegan and Des O'Connor. On television there was her 'Swing Along With Lorrae Desmond' series.

But a new breed of aggressive rock singers were beginning to take over and soon Lorrae decided it was time to go home. Back in

Australia she had her own T.V series 'The Lorrae Desmond Show', that was her country's entry at the first International Television Festival held in Montreux, Switzerland in May 1961. She made the occasional return visit to Britain playing cabaret etc., but more and more she directed her talents towards straight acting and it was via this medium that she became known to a new generation of British viewers during the late eighties, playing Shirley Gilroy in the long running Australian soap, 'A Country Practice'. Lorrae continues to appear regularly on Australian TV, including occasional appearances in another day-time drama 'Home and Away', while in between she tours in her 'One Woman Show'.

Lorrae Desmond Recordings

H.M.V

B 10428 Feb 53 'Mommy's little angel / Puppy love' (acc by Frank  
Cordell orch)  
DECCA

F 10375 Sep 54 'Hold my hand / On the waterfront' (acc by  
Bob  
Sharples orch)

F 10398 Oct 54 'No one but you / Far away' (acc by Stanley  
Black orch)

F 10404 Nov 54 (with Johnston Bros.) 'I can't tell a waltz from a  
tango / For better,  
for worse'

F 10461 Feb 55 'Why, oh why / A boy on a Saturday night'

F 10510 Apr 55 'Where will the dimple be (with the Melodaires)  
/ Don't (featuring  
Geoff Taylor)

F 10533 May 55 'Heartbroken (with The Johnston Bros.) /

Stowaway'

F 10612 Sep 55 'Wake the town and tell the people / You  
should know'

PARLOPHONE

R 4239 Oct 56 'Written on the wind / A house with love in it'

R 4287 Mar 57 'Play the music / You won't be around'

R 4320 Jun 57 (with The Rebels) 'Kansas City special /

Preacher preacher'

R 4361 Oct 57 (with The Rebels) 'Ding-dong rock-a-billy  
wedding /

Cabin boy'

R 4400 Jan 58 'Two ships / Little David'

R 4430 May 58 'The secret of happiness / Down by the river'

(acc by Bob  
Sharples Music)

R 4463 Aug 58 'Soda pop hop / Blue blue day' (acc by  
Ken Jones orch  
& chorus)

R 4534 Mar 59 'Tall Paul / Wait for it'

R 4670 Jun 60 'When a boy meets a girl / Get your daddie's  
car tonight'

## Terry DEVON

Terry, a Londoner from Bow, always wanted to be a singer and at the age of 15, currently working in her father's hairdressing shop on the Mile End Road, appeared on a Carroll Levis 'unknown artists' show broadcast from Leicester Square Odeon. Terry then replied to a job for a singer advertised in 'Melody Maker'. Dressed up to try and look older she auditioned for Billy Thorburn and despite her age and inexperience (one week with a Teddy Joyce band at the Troxy, Stepney) got the job. Within a week she was making her first broadcast with Billy's band live from the stage of the Hippodrome, Bristol and soon after made her first record. This was all in November 1938 and soon the outbreak of war was to send all her dreams tumbling, although she continued to record or broadcast during the early forties with Billy, and also Oscar Rabin and George Scott-Wood.

During the early post war years Terry toured in variety, including a double act with Len Camber, sang with the Woolf Phillips Orchestra alongside Dick James, and also worked with Vic Lewis, Nat Allen, Harold Geller and Robin Richmond, broadcasting with most of them. She sang regularly with The Stardusters, a new co-operative band, and appeared with Rudy Rome at the Albany Club.

In July 1949 Terry was voted by readers of the national 'Daily Graphic' newspaper as Britain's most popular crooner. Anne Shelton came second and Alan Dean third! A 'Melody Maker' poll also put her top of the female vocalist list. Most readers had probably heard Terry on radio where she was a regular on numerous programmes. She was one on the original team on the hugely popular 'Sing it Again' series with Benny Lee, Carole Carr, Josephine Crombie and Alan Dean.

By the close of the forties Terry was resident vocalist with Tito Burns and his Music having married Tito in November 1948. Early into the fifties she gave up touring to raise a family and a 'Melody Maker' photo in January 1955 pictured their 21 month old daughter Linda following in dad's footsteps with her own miniature accordion, specially made for her by the American manufacturer Magnus.

Little more was heard of Terry until 1956 when she re-appeared for a while, singing on concerts with the short-lived Malcolm Mitchell Orchestra.

On the record scene Terry provided 'vocal refrain' on several recordings with pianist Billy Thorburn's 'Organ Dance Band and Me' and also recorded with the bands of Oscar Rabin and Tito Burns, but her only truly solo disc appears to be just the one for Decca in 1950.

Terry Devon Recordings

PARLOPHONE (with Billy Thorburn Orch)

F 1327 Dec 38 'Any broken hearts to mend'

F 1328 Dec 38 'Smile and sing your cares away (with Eddie  
Guray)

F 1343 Jan 39 'There's a new apple tree'

F 1355 Jan 39 'You're a sweet little heartache'

F 1411 May 39 'The same old story'



## 'Diane'

Featuring on several recordings by the Oscar Rabin band under the alluring name of 'Diane' she was in fact Dorothy Wick from Hull. Born around 1930 she began performing as a child dancer, before taking up singing and in 1936 won a talent contest that brought with it a regular position as vocalist with the Duncan Broodie band at Portobello's Marine Gardens ballroom near Edinburgh. Dorothy then moved to other small outfits before auditioning for Oscar Rabin in 1939, joining his band at Hammersmith Palais in January 1940, eventually replacing Beryl Davis as lead female vocalist. Once rated by a musical journalist as "prettiest of all the current songbirds", it was Oscar who gave her the name Diane and soon she also became one of the family, marrying Oscar's son Bernard.

In 1943 Diane gave up performing, having given birth to a son Michael, but a year or so later was back, not only appearing with her father-in-law but also freelancing around London clubs. By the fifties she had given up professional work for good, eventually joining husband Bernard, who for years ran the Rabin band agency, in an antique business.

Diane recordings with the Oscar Rabin band

### REX

9742	Mar 40	'Bluebirds in the moonlight'
9768	Apl 40	'Moonlight avenue'
9769	Apl 40	'No souvenirs'
9797	Jun 40	'Cuban romeo'
9798	Jun 40	'Don't ever pass me by'
9837	Aug 40	'Memories live longer than dreams'
9856	Sep 40	'Where the blue begins'
9886	Nov 40	'I'm spending Christmas with the old folks'
9914	Feb 41	'When your train has gone'
9963	Apl 41	'Goodnight and God bless you / Over the hill'
9980	May 41	'Waltzing in the clouds'
9981	May 41	'I ain't got nobody' (with others)
10005	Jly 41	'I should have known you years ago'
10017	Aug 41	'I hear a rhapsody'
10053	Oct 41	'Tell your troubles to the breeze'
10058	Oct 41	'I'll never let a day pass by'
10091	Dec 41	'He wants to be a pilot / Lullaby to a hero'
10098	Dec 41	'Do you care'
10111	Feb 42	'Two in love (with Bob Dale)'
10112	Feb 42	'Baby mine'
10113	Feb 42	'I'll be with you in apple blossom time /

Tropical

magic'

### DECCA

F 8107	Mar 42	'I'll always remember'
F 8117	Apl 42	'I try to say I love you / Wherever you are'
F 8124	May 42	'Sometimes'
F 8143	Jun 42	'You're mine'
F 8165	Jly 42	'One dozen roses' (with Benny Lee)

### PARLOPHONE

F 2246	Oct 47	'My first love my last love for always'
F 2260	Dec 47	'That's my desire'
F 2304	Aug 48	'Toolie-oolie-doolie'
F 2317	Oct 48	'When love has passed you by /

Only

passing clouds'

F 2322 Nov 48 'Promise in your eyes'

F 2337 Feb 49 'Susy / It all comes back to me now'

## Reg DIXON

One of the most popular radio comedians of the forties and fifties, Reg Dixon is well remembered for his catch phrase "I'm poorly.....proper poorly" and the song 'Confidentially' that he wrote himself.

Born on 24th February 1915, Reg began his show business career as a child actor at his home town of Coventry and as a teenager toured with Lord George Sanger's Circus. Quite a competent musician (and songwriter) he later played in variety as half of a piano double act Scott and Dixon, while developing his droll humour and songs.

After wartime service in the R.A.F Reg returned to the boards playing summer seasons and pantomime. But it was on radio that most people heard him. During the early fifties he was one of the regular comedians on, and often compered, radio's 'Variety Bandbox' and promoted his own stage show under the title 'To look at me' (another catch phrase) which played variety theatres around the country.

In June 1952 Reg stepped into George Formby's shoes, playing the lead in the London production 'Zip Goes a Million' a musical specially written for George, who had suffered a heart attack. Such was the success he made of the part, many thought the show would close without Formby, he played another seven months at the Palace Theatre before taking the show on tour. In the November 1952 Royal Variety Performance Reg appeared in a feature of music hall songs.

He had a part in the 1953 film 'Love in Pawn' and made his first television appearance that year in a live telecast from Blackpool Palace Ballroom during July. He was on I.T.V's opening night variety show 'Channel Nine' on Thursday 22nd September 1955.

Reg continued to tour in variety, unmistakable in his black and yellow striped blazer with a several sizes too small trilby perched on his head, throughout the sixties and seventies, while his broadcasts included a straight role playing a stable lad in the series 'Confidentially - They're Off'

Used to playing Buttons in pantomime, in later years he became an excellent 'dame' and was still professionally active in the early eighties. Reg died during 1984 at his home in Bournemouth, where his wife Gladys was still living a decade later. As well as his signature tune he recorded several songs, most displaying his humorous North Country style.

Reg Dixon Recordings

### DECCA

F 9192	Aug 49	'Confidentially / I like to do things like that'
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(acc by Albert

Marland Orch)

F 9324	Jan 50	'I've started courtin' / Why can't I' (acc AMO)
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F 9683	Jun 51	'Confidential lullaby / I can't cry
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anymore'  
 F 9931 Jly 52 'Heart of a clown / Ordinary people'  
 F 10028 Jan 53 'excerpts from Royal Variety Show'

H.M.V.

B 10813 Jan 55 'Surprisingly / (with Janet Brown)  
 The feeling of

falling in love'

B 10814 Jan 55 'Sew a silver button on the moon /  
 There goes

Charlie' (acc by Frank

Cordell orch)

## Reginald DIXON

Often confused, even by radio presenters who should have known better, with comic Reg 'Confidentially' Dixon, Reginald was born in Sheffield in 1904; a church organist at 15 he earned a living playing organ in cinemas while still in his teens. It was in March 1930 that he took on the job that was to make him famous, becoming resident organist at the Tower Ballroom Blackpool, where his signature tune 'I do like to be beside the seaside' must have been heard by millions of holidaymakers.

Although certainly the most well known, he was not the only organist playing for the enjoyment of Blackpool's holiday-makers. For instance, during the summer of 1952 there was also Horace Finch at the Winter Gardens Empress Ballroom, Watson Holmes (was that his real name?) at the Palace Ballroom and Bobby Pagan at the Odeon Cinema.

When, on Friday 14th December 1956, a devastating fire destroyed the Tower Ballroom, the famous Wurlitzer was saved from the flames and continued to be played in the re-built ballroom the following season.

When the musical press, in early 1959, carried some advertisements seeking bookings by Reginald Dixon, 'Australia's Ace Organist', the Blackpool Tower Company published a statement "that this person was in no way connected with the world famous organist who would be appearing at the Tower as usual". Except for a six year break during WWII, when he attained the rank of Squadron Leader in the R.A.F., Reginald remained at Blackpool until 1970.

Reggie made hundreds of records. He began recording during the thirties on the Zonophone and Sterno labels. His later 'hits' series appeared on Regal-Zonophone and Rex and a long association with Columbia that began after the war extends to so many titles I have not attempted to list them.

Reginald Dixon died at his Blackpool home in May 1985.

## Pat DODD

A native of London's Canning Town, Pat was born 17th March 1909. A pianist since his school days, his first job was tinkling the ivories at Leyton Picture House in 1923. Next he joined Victor Vorzanger's band at East Ham Palais for two years, before moving on to the Piccadilly Club in Glasgow and the Astoria Dance Salon in London's Charing Cross Road. By 1929 he had graduated to the swank Berkeley Hotel where he stayed until the war, playing under the batons of

Sydney Kyte, Percival Mackey and Al Collins. In the recording studio Pat, an excellent sight reader, was in great demand and during the thirties recorded with bands led by Lew Stone, Ray Noble, Carroll Gibbons and Geraldo.

Following the outbreak of war Pat joined the R.A.F. where he became a founder member of the Dance Orchestra of No.1 Balloon Centre, stationed at Kidbrooke in Kent. Better known as The Skyrockets, after the war they became pit orchestra at the London Palladium. When in 1955 Eric Rogers was brought in to form a new Palladium orchestra, Pat was the only original member to be retained. Working at the Palladium he accompanied many top International stars. During a June 1959 edition of A.T.V's 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium', compere Bruce Forsyth introduced Pat to the audience and he played a Cliff Adams composition 'Stag party' and later recorded it.

By early 1960 Pat had given up the Palladium piano stool to become musical associate with the commercial television company A.T.V, a position that benefitted from his many musical skills, and this continued until 1975. Pat then enjoyed a well earned retirement with his wife Mary, at Leatherhead in Surrey, until his death in August 1991 at the age of 82.

Pat Dodd Recordings

PARLOPHONE

F 2261 Dec 47 'In the still of the night / Night and day'

H.M.V.

C 3722 May 48 (soloist with Skyrockets) 'Concerto in Jazz'

DECCA

F 8891 Jly 48 (soloist with Philip Green Orch)  
 'Slaughter on

Tenth Avenue'

PYE INTERNATIONAL

7N25030 Jun 59 'Stag party / Odds and Dodds'

## Lonnie DONEGAN

A blues man at heart, it was the mid-fifties skiffle boom that put Lonnie on the road to fame and fortune. This was a boom that he virtually started himself with his recording of 'Rock Island Line', a song that became a million seller, although at the time he made no more from it than the few pounds basic session fee.

Anthony James Donegan, a Scot born 29th April 1931 at Glasgow, was brought up in London. It was a musical household, his father played violin, but Lonnie was over 17 before he began learning to play. It was his interest in singing blues numbers to his own guitar accompaniment in the style of American blues singer Lonnie Johnson (they later played on the same Royal Festival Hall concert) that eventually led him to adopt his idol's name. By late 1948 Lonnie was sitting in with groups at South London Jazz Club, where he often did a solo session on guitar and vocal.

Called up for National Service in 1949 he

spent some of his two years army service playing in the Wolverines, a group led by fellow serviceman Ken Grinyer who later became resident at the Southampton Rhythm Club.

Following demob Lonnie formed his own semi-pro outfit, playing at Wood Green Jazz Club, which received good reviews. The band consisted of Bill Brunskill on cornet, Jim Bray tuba, Gordon Blundy trombone, Geoff Kemp clarinet, Bill Wren piano and Arthur Fryatt drums with Lonnie on guitar, banjo and vocals. This band with Lonnie hailed as "a new jazz find" appeared on Whit Monday 2nd July 1952 at the Royal Festival Hall in the 'Jazz Big Show' promoted by Maurice Kinn and advertised as the greatest jazz event ever staged in Britain. A young jazz fan at this show, Maureen Taylor, who asked for his autograph, later became his first wife.

In March 1953 Lonnie joined a new jazz band being assembled by Ken Colyer (the man who really introduced Skiffle to Britain). Fellow players included Chris Barber and Monty Sunshine and during its short life the band gained a big following with jazz fans. Often Ken and Lonnie played guitars and sang together on skiffle numbers, but following disagreement on musical content Colyer and the remainder of his band parted company little more than a year after it was formed.

The band continued under the leadership of trombonist Chris Barber and in July 1954 made a 10 inch L.P. 'New Orleans Joys' for Decca that included two skiffle numbers sung by Lonnie. They were 'Rock Island Line' (a Huddie Ledbetter original also recorded a couple of years earlier by George Melly) and 'John Henry' (Decca didn't really want to put them in saying they were not jazz). The record sold well and the company decided to issue the tracks as 78rpm singles with the last to be released being the skiffle numbers in November 1955.

Being on Decca's pale blue jazz label it was a short while before the general public noticed 'Rock Island Line', but following a few radio airings sales took off, surprising not only Decca but Chris and Lonnie as well. Entering the sales chart in early January 1956, by the first week of February it had reached its high point of No.8. In total it was on the hit parade for 22 weeks. Released in America on the London label it sold 30,000 copies in the first week, also rising to an amazing (for a British artist) No.8 position on their sales chart, way ahead of the home grown version by Don Cornell (hardly his kind of song?) who only made it to 59th place.

Sales were soon climbing towards the million mark, doing much for Lonnie's image both sides of the Atlantic, but little for his bank balance as both he and Chris Barber had received just a session fee for the original L.P. and no royalties were due. Riding on the success of this disc, especially in the States, Lonnie left the Barber band to make a promotional tour over there. Chris encouraged him to do so saying if things didn't work out he could always come back.

But things did work out, very well, with an appearance on the 'Perry Como Show' on Saturday 19th May 1956 plus numerous personal appearances across the U.S. Back home Lonnie formed his own skiffle group comprising Denny

Wright guitar, Mickey Ashman bass, and Nick Nicholls drums (ill health later forced Denny to drop out and Dick Bishop took his place). Their first concert was on Sunday 26th August 1956 at London's Stoll Theatre alongside Terry Lightfoot's Jazzmen and The Dill Jones Trio. Next day they began a variety tour with a week at Derby Hippodrome followed by weeks at Nottingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Leeds, all on a bill that included singer Mike McKenzie and a young new comedian, Des O'Connor.

In February 1956 Decca, hoping to cash-in on Lonnie's success, issued a second disc 'Diggin' my potatoes' (recorded with Barber a year before) but by now Lonnie had signed up with Pye Records and his first single for them coupling 'Lost John' and 'Stewball' proved to be a double success with both sides registering on the charts. Entering in April, by the beginning of June the disc was at No.2, only held back from the top spot by a three week run of Ronnie Hilton's 'No other love'. 'Lost John' also made the American charts. Oriole also took advantage of Lonnie's popularity and issued 'The Passing Stranger' his theme for a 1954 film, a slow ballad and an indication of some of his later work yet to come.

Intending to enjoy his new found success to the full, Lonnie took delivery at the end of August of a 2½ litre Daimler convertible and by the end of the year had appointed ex-tenor sax player Peter Buchanan as his personal manager.

Lonnie's first big West End appearance came with a three week booking leading up to Christmas 1956 at the Prince of Wales Theatre with Anne Shelton. During the year Lonnie had made several radio and TV appearances on the likes of 'Show Band Show' and 'Saturday Night Out'. On Sunday 13th January 1957 his group was on Jack Jackson's I.T.V. show with Alma Cogan and Danny Purches and on 2nd February he was on both BBC radio and T.V. live from the Royal Albert Hall in the Trad Jazz Festival's first 'Jazz Saturday'. During February Dickie Bishop left to form his own group and was replaced by Jimmy Currie from Tony Crombie's Rockets. On Sunday 17th March Lonnie and his boys appeared on 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' with Pearl Bailey and the same evening were on radio's 'Calling All Stars', and on Saturday 23rd March Lonnie made his first appearance on 'Six Five Special'.

Further Pye Nixa recordings had arrived during the year, including a 10 inch L.P. 'Lonnie Donegan Showcase' and an E.P., 'Skiffle Session'. Chart entries were 'Bring a little water Sylvie', reaching No.7 and 'Don't you rock me daddy-o' that made No.4. But it was 'Cumberland gap' in April 1957 that was to give Lonnie his first No.1, a position it held for five weeks, and it was Lonnie's very next single 'Gamblin' man', backed with 'Puttin' on the style', another double chart entry, that gave him his second spell on top in June.

On Tuesday 26th March 1957 Lonnie was due to leave on a four week tour of America, but was delayed until Thursday because he forgot to apply for a visa. This U.S. tour opened on Sunday 31st March at Madison Square Gardens, New York, in a package with the Harlem

Globetrotters basketball team. It was an exchange visit with Bill Haley's Comets coming to Britain. Some reports coming back suggested the tour wasn't going too well with skiffle not a great attraction over there. Also many customers objected to Lonnie's group taking up time usually allocated to the Globetrotters' comedy warm up routine.

Later, back in Britain, Lonnie rejected any criticism of the tour and there was no doubting his popularity home here when he opened on 29th April for two weeks at the London Palladium, sharing the bill with The Platters vocal group and comedian Arthur Haynes. With little over 12 months solo experience under his belt some observers were noting what a self assured professional performer he was, while others were knocking him as a rather cocksure big-head. Lonnie himself admitted he could be "difficult at times" and "liked to do things my way", "but my only concern is to give the public what they want". And no doubt he did just that when he topped the bill on 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' again on 12th May.

Another variety tour, again with Des O'Connor, took Lonnie around the country during most of 1957. This included, in June, a four week season at the London Hippodrome where they were joined by Alma Cogan and multi instrumentalist Vic Hyde. In August he took his wife Maureen on a somewhat delayed honeymoon to Italy. They had married in March 1955 but this was the first chance they had been able to get away. In November the group made a flying visit to Paris for an airing on a French radio show 'Musicorama' that also featured the Count Basie Orchestra. Come Christmas 1957 and Lonnie had his first taste of pantomime playing Wishee Washee in 'Aladdin' at Chiswick Empire. Television appearances during 1957 had included a 'Saturday Spectacular' in July, 'Top of the Bill' in September and further spots on 'Six Five Special'. Lonnie also composed the music and appeared in the 1957 black & white romantic comedy film 'Light Fingers' starring Eunice Gayson and Roland Culver.

1958 followed much the same pattern as before with highspots being a six week season of afternoon teenage pop shows at Blackpool's Palace Theatre, plus local club work in the evenings. In October there was another visit to the States where his 'Grand Coolie Dam' was doing well, and in December he repeated his role in 'Aladdin', this time at Stockton's Globe Theatre. It was "all skiffle" in Stockton that Christmas because Chas. McDevitt and Shirley Douglas were in 'Babes in the Wood' over at the Hippodrome.

On the record scene Lonnie had ended 1957 with two more chart entries 'My Dixie darling' and 'Jack o' Diamonds'. His first disc of 1958 'Grand Coolie Dam' was another top ten hit that during its 15 week stay in the chart reached No.6 the first week of June. On the reverse side of this disc was 'Nobody loves like an Irishman' which the BBC decided to ban (although he was allowed to sing it live with some word changes). Further successes during the year were the double chart entry 'Sally, don't you grieve' backed with 'Betty Betty Betty' that made No.11 in July, and 'Lonesome traveller' at No.28 with its

one week entry at the end of September. Made for the Christmas party market 'Lonnie's skiffle party' just crept into the Top 30 chart.

When The Kingston Trio version of 'Tom Dooley' became a hit in America Pye decided it was just the right number for Lonnie and recording manager Michael Barclay rushed recording equipment to Glasgow, where he was appearing in variety. Both versions were released here the same week and both spent 14 weeks on the chart. Lonnie's record spent four weeks at No.3 position during December, held in check by Lord Rockingham's 'Hoots mon' and Conway Twitty's 'It's only make believe' swopping the top two slots between them. The Kingston Trio made it to No.5.

Another memorable Donegan number, destined to become his second million seller, was 'Does your chewing gum lose its flavour on the bed post overnight', a song he says he found in an old Boy Scout book. It also reached No.3 position during a 12 week run from February 1959. 'Chewing gum' also gave Lonnie his third American chart entry, but not until 1961. Issued there by Dot in 1959 it went almost unnoticed until some time later Arnie Ginsburg, a Boston disc-jockey, came across a copy and began plugging it on his shows with overwhelming results and another big U.S. hit for Lonnie. Oddly enough the song already had a history in America, being a big hit there for the popular twenties radio duo of baritone Ernest Hare and tenor Billy Jones. Their recording 'Does the spearment lose its flavor on the bedpost overnight' was one of 1924's top selling records.

Highlights of 1959 began with the Donegan family (by now there were daughters Fiona and Corinna) moving into a new £15,000 Swiss chalet style house on the edge of Epping Forest. Two weeks at London's Palace Theatre, topping the bill with Alma Cogan from the 23rd March was followed by several weeks on tour before a summer season in 'The Lonnie Donegan Show' at the Great Yarmouth Aquarium with support from Lorrae Desmond, Des O'Connor and Miki & Griff (Lonnie did much to promote this husband and wife folk singing duo). From June his I.T.V series 'Putting on the Donegan' was popular Friday evening viewing. By now skiffle was on the wane and Lonnie, while not deserting it altogether, began to broaden his appeal performing, as he explained, "jazz and blues material polished up to suit a variety audience".

Lonnie's second disc of 1959 'Fort Worth Jail' became his twentieth side to make the top thirty. 'The Battle of New Orleans', a U.S number one for Johnny Horton, was a natural for Lonnie and he took it to No.2 at the end of July, leaving Johnny's disc in the shade over here. When Horton followed up with 'Sal's got a sugar lip' Pye rushed out a Donegan version, recorded on the Aquarium stage at midnight. Not quiet as successful, but it still made No.13. On the backing number 'Chesapeake Bay' accompaniment came from The Clyde Valley Stompers who Lonnie, now Pye Record's jazz music adviser, was promoting on the label. Pye issued a new Donegan L.P. in August titled 'Tops With Lonnie' that featured a collection of his hits. Worth a mention is the clever album cover that pictured Lonnie surrounded by lots of toy

spinning tops. He closed 1959 with 'Robinson Crusoe' at Finsbury Park Empire, in what was described as a record breaking season.

Another minor hit 'San Miguel', late in 1959, was soon topped by Lonnie's March 1960 release of 'My old man's a dustman', possibly his most requested and best remembered number. With words and music credited to Lonnie himself, it is said to be based on a traditional song 'My old man's a fireman'. The records enormous success put Pye's Mitcham factory on overtime to keep up with orders. It became his third number one and another million seller.

On 16th May 1960 Lonnie had the honour of appearing on the Royal Variety Performance at London's Victoria Palace Theatre, the first to be televised live. The following month he was honoured again, being voted "best dressed man in light entertainment" by the Wholesale Clothing Manufacturers Association. 1960 also saw another series of 'Putting on the Donegan', a summer season back at Great Yarmouth with The Dallas Boys, Billy Baxter and Miki & Griff. Pantomime that year found him playing Buttons in 'Cinderella' at Nottingham Theatre Royal. Danny La Rue was one of the ugly sisters!

The first British artist to receive three gold discs, Lonnie was presented with the second and third of these by Bing Crosby (over here filming 'Road To Hong Kong' and himself the holder of twenty golden platters) on Monday 9th October 1961. As the sixties progressed Lonnie's vocal style was becoming softer, smoother, more country and western, perhaps not quite as popular but more relaxing. His March 1962 release surprised many fans, being 'The party's over' from the musical 'Bells Are Ringing' coupled with 'Over the rainbow', two ballads sung in a soft style with choral backing. Throughout the decade Lonnie was as busy as ever, his I.T.V series 'Putting on the Donegan' continued and every summer he topped the bill either at Great Yarmouth or Blackpool.

In 1969 he played a long season at London's Talk of the Town performing what was described as "a dazzling display of stage craft giving the audience a feast of music, comedy and dancing that had them beating their hands raw in appreciation". He toured New Zealand, Canada and the States with great success. His music publishing company Tyler Music also had a hit with the Moody Blues 'Knights in white satin'.

By the eighties Lonnie was suffering heart problems (he'd had a weak heart since childhood) and underwent surgery in 1985. A re-occurrence required a triple by-pass in 1992, but not long after he was singing 'My old man's a dustman' at an Earl's Court concert to celebrate the Queen's 40 year reign.

During the nineties Lonnie semi-retired to a villa in Malaga, Spain with his third wife Sharon (second was actress Jill Westlake who he married mid-sixties) but he continued working and recorded a new album 'Rock Island Line Rocks On'.

Many of the successful (and not so successful) sixties rockers admitted that they owed their initial inspiration to early Donegan records and Lonnie was certainly one of the major pioneers of the British beat scene. He was awarded an MBE in 2000 and died aged 71 on

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2002.

#### Lonnie Donegan Recordings

TEMPO		(v. with Chris Barber Band)
A 116	Aug 55	'Precious Lord lead me on'
DECCA		(LD Skiffle Group)
F 10647	Nov 55	'Rock Island line / John Henry'
F 10695	Feb 56	'Diggin' my potatoes / Bury my body'
ORIOLE		
CB 1329	Jly 56	'The passing stranger'
COLUMBIA		
DB 3850	Nov 56	'On a Christmas day / Take my hand precious
Lord'		
PYE NIXA		(LD Skiffle Group)
N 15036	Mar 56	'Lost John / Stewball'
N 15071	Sep 56	'Bring a little water Sylvie / Dead or alive'
N 15080	Jan 57	'Don't you rock me daddy-o / I'm
Alabamy bound'		
N 15087	Mar 57	'Cumberland gap / Love is strange'
N 15093	May 57	'Puttin' on the style / Gamblin' man'
N 15108	Sep 57	'My Dixie darling / I'm just a rolling stone'
N 15116	Jan 58	'Jack o' diamonds / Ham 'n' eggs'
N 15129	Apl 58	'Grand coolie dam / Nobody loves like
an Irishman'		
NJ 2006	May 58	'Midnight special / When the sun goes down'
(re-issue of a '56 recording with Chris Barber)		
N 15148	Jun 58	'Sally don't you grieve / Betty Betty Betty'
N 15158	Aug 58	'Lonesome traveller / Times are getting
hard boys'		
N 15165	Oct 58	'Lonnie's skiffle party'
N 15172	Nov 58	'Tom Dooley / Rock o' my soul'
N 15181	Jan 59	'Does your chewing gum lose its flavour /
Aunt Rhody'		
N 15198	Apl 59	'Fort Worth jail / Whoa buck'
N 15206	Jun 59	'The battle of New Orleans / Darling Corey'
N 15219	Aug 59	'Kevin Barry / My Laggan love'
N 15223	Oct 59	'Sal's got a sugar lip / Chesapeake bay'
N 15237	Dec 59	'San Miguel / Talking guitar blues'
N 15256	Mar 60	'My old man's a dustman / The golden vanity'
N 15267	May 60	'I wanna go home / Jimmy Brown the newsboy'
N 15275	Aug 60	'Lorelei / In all my wildest dreams'
N 15312	Nov 60	'Lively (with his group) / Black cat (acc by
Ralph		
Dolimore orch'		
N 15315	Nov 60	'Virgin Mary / Beyond the sunset'
N 15330	Mar 61	'Beneath the willow / Leave my woman alone'
N 15354	Apl 61	'Have a drink on me / Seven daffodils'
N 15371	Jun 61	'Michael row the boat / Lumbered'
N 15410	Dec 61	'The Comancheros / Rambling round'
N 15424	Mar 62	'The party's over / Over the rainbow'
N 15446	Jun 62	'I'll never fall in love again / Keep on the

sunny side'  
 N 15455 Aug 62 'Pick a bale of cotton / Steal away'  
 N 15493 Dec 62 (with Max Miller) 'The market song / Tit-bits'  
 N 15514 Mar 63 'Trumpet sounds / Losing by a hair'  
 N 15530 May 63 'A very good year / Rise up'  
 N 15564 Sep 63 'I've gotta gal so fine / Lemon tea'  
 N 15579 Oct 63 '500 miles away from home / This train'  
 N 15669 Jun 64 'It's a long road to travel / Beans in my ears'  
 N 15679 Sep 64 'There's a big wheel / Fisherman's luck'  
 N 15803 Mar 65 'Get out of my life / Won't you tell me'  
 N 15893 Jly 65 'Louisiana man / Bound for Zion'  
 N 15993 Dec 65 'Where in the world are we going / World cup Willie'  
 N 17109 66 'I wanna go home / Black cat' (reissues)  
 N 17232 67 'Auntie Maggie's remedy / My sweet Marie'

#### COLUMBIA

DB 8371 68 'Relax your mind / Toys'

#### DECCA

F 12983 69 'Who knows where the time goes / My lovely Juanata'

#### R.C.A.

RCA 2128 71 'Come to Australia / Don't blame the child'

#### PYE

7N 45009 70 'Burning bridges / Till I can't take anymore'  
 7N 45184 70 'Get out of my life / Speak to the sky'  
 7N 45548 76 'Battle of New Orleans / Puttin` on the style'  
 7N 46096 78 'My old mans a dustman / I wanna go home'  
 7N 46107 78 'Battle of New Orleans / Tom Dooley'

#### DECCA

FR 13669 76 'Censored / I've lost my little Willie'

#### CHRYSLIS

CHS 2205 78 'Rock Island Line / Ham and eggs'  
 CHS 2211 78 'Puttin` on the style / Drop down baby'

## Val DOONICAN

Val didn't really make his mark on the entertainment scene until the mid-sixties, but this easy going purveyor of ballads and Irish novelty songs, with a wardrobe of fancy sweaters, had been a long time working up to his 'overnight success'.

Michael Valentine Doonican was born on 3rd February 1929 at the Irish coastal town of Waterford, the youngest in a family of four boys and four girls. Val took a keen interest in the guitar and with little work about he had lots of time to practice. He studied arranging and became a first rate jazz musician. He didn't

have too bad a voice either.

After many years with amateur groups, by 1946 he had turned professional and was playing in various dance bands around Ireland. At the turn of the decade and continuing the dance band work, he was also one third of the Bruce Clark Trio with a series on Irish commercial radio, in which he sang the praises of Donnelly's Sausages. Despite the product, Val with his velvet tones and gentle humour was credited as being on his way to becoming Ireland's number one radio heart-throb.

It was through his radio work that he came into contact with a singing quartet, The Four Ramblers, and when their guitarist-leader Jimmy Nolan dropped out, Val, who was able to do all the arrangements, was taken on as replacement. With the Ramblers he was soon touring England, appearing on variety bills across the country. The BBC booked them for its radio series 'Riders of the Range' and they were also to be heard on Radio Luxembourg supporting Terry the Irish Minstrel. It was while he was touring with the Ramblers, supporting Anthony Newley, that Val met fellow singer Lynnette Rae who he later married.

The Four Ramblers had already recorded for Decca during previous English tours from the mid-forties and this association continued with Val now part of the team. These discs were all of an Irish flavour, or as a backing chorus for Josef Locke. The Ramblers, who were great fans of the American Four Aces, had to go private to record their own version of the Aces style. A few years later these tracks came into the hands of Philips Records and they released them labelled as The Clubmen.

The Ramblers proved to be a popular support act on the British variety stage being well booked throughout the fifties, but by that decade's closing years Val had decided to go it alone and try his luck as a solo artist. He appeared on BBC TV's 'Beauty Box' with the Brunette Toppers and on a radio series, 'Dreamy Afternoon'.

Doing fine singing a mixed bag of popular ballads and a selection of traditional and humorous Irish ditties, he was still virtually an unknown come the early sixties. It was as such that he was asked by compere David Jacobs to appear on a charity show David was organising. Going on first as a filler act he was well received by the audience and a fellow entertainer, comedian Dickie Henderson, was sufficiently impressed to recommend him to impresario Val Parnell.

A few weeks later Doonican was appearing at the London night spot Jack `O Clubs, so the other Val decided to go and have a look. The result was an appearance in early 1964 on 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium', a show Val Parnell presented on the ITV network. This turned out to be the 'overnight success' previously mentioned and the next day Doonican's phone didn't stop ringing with offers of recording contracts and further bookings. So well had he been received by viewers he was invited back again the following Sunday.

Within weeks Val went from a £60 a week club singer to a £700 a week star. The BBC signed him for a TV series that ran for twenty four years until 1988. It was on these shows that

Val established his trade mark of colourful sweaters (originally on a black & white screen!) and always a song while relaxing in his old rocking chair. Other BBC work included, in October 1964, an appearance on the very last 'Workers Playtime' broadcast from a cardboard box factory.

Decca had already put him back on disc, now as a solo vocalist, his first offering 'Blue blue day' being available from February 1963, but it wasn't until after his Palladium appearance that the buying public took notice. 'Walk Tall' released in September 1964 spent 21 weeks on the 'New Musical Express' Top Thirty chart, reaching the high spot of No.3 during the first week of January 1965. Val went on to further recording success with a total of fourteen singles making the hit parade chart.

Val, now drawing his old age pension, still does the odd concert tour and is not at all bothered that television has seemed to have forgotten him.

#### Fifties Recordings by the Four Ramblers DECCA

F 9558 Dec 50 'Christmas in Killarney / If every day  
could be  
Christmas day'  
F 9595 Jan 51 'Tipperary samba /  
The shepherd on the  
glenside'  
F 9758 Sep 51 'Saturday night in Dublin /  
Hannigans  
hooley'  
F 9801 Nov 51 'Hello Patsy Fagan / The pride  
of Tipperary'

#### PHILIPS (labelled as *The Clubmen*)

PB 475 Jun 55 'It may sound silly / I want to be  
home again'

(as Val's solo discs didn't begin until 1963 I've not  
listed them)

## Nadia DORE

During the mid-1940's Nadia recorded with Jack Payne's band, sang with a Paul Adam group at the Milroy Club and led The Debonaires vocal group with Ambrose at the Nightingale. In November 1949 she teamed up with Ray Burns as a vocal duo in a short lived variety act. In mid-1950 Nadia was back with the Ambrose Orchestra, but less than a year later was singing and broadcasting with Geraldo. In 1951 she became resident vocalist with the Harry Parry Sextet at London's Washington Hotel and in March 1952 is reported to have married the proprietor Mr. Leonard de Pinna. After the birth of a son, Michael in July 1953, Nadia disappeared from the dance band scene, although she continued to make some broadcasts.

#### Nadia Dore Recordings

#### H.M.V. (with Jack Payne Band)

BD 5883 Mar 45 'Accentuate the positive'  
BD 5892 May 45 'Robin Hood' (with the *Crackerjacks*)  
BD 5897 Jly 45 'Bell bottom trousers'

#### COLUMBIA (her Debonaires vocal group with Felix Mendelssohn Serenaders)

FB 3198 Feb 46 'Paradise Isle'  
FB 3145 Sep 45 'Goodbye Hawaii / My isle of golden  
dreams'  
FB 3246 Oct 46 'Pretty red hibiscus'

#### DECCA (with Ambrose orch)

F 9112 Apl 49 'It's magic (with Ray Burns)'  
F 9116 Apl 49 'Clopin clopant (with Ray Burns)'

#### PARLOPHONE (with Geraldo orch)

F 2406 Apl 50 'Music ! music! music!'  
F 2415 Jun 50 'The old piano roll blues'  
F 2422 Aug 50 'Candy and cake'  
F 2443 Jan 51 'Orange coloured sky'  
F 2448 Feb 51 'The Tennessee waltz / I still love you  
(with  
Derrick Francis)'

## Craig DOUGLAS

From a family of eight children including three sets of twins (Craig was half on one set born on 13th August 1941), a tall fair haired ex-milkman from Newport, Isle of Wight, Terry Perkins, as he was then, won a talent competition at the local Moderna Cinema singing 'Mary's boy child'. Owner Robin Britton saw the talent there and proceeded to groom him for greater things. After some confidence building appearances at small venues around the island, Britton got Craig a booking on a Sunday concert at the nearby Ryde Commodore Ballroom. As an unknown, and just one of the support acts to The Mudlarks vocal group, he got a great reception and certainly didn't go unnoticed by one of the audience, agent Bunny Lewis. Back in London Bunny recommended Craig to Decca A & R man Dick Rowe and it wasn't long before he was in their London studios making his first record 'Sitting in a tree house', which was released in August 1958.

However it was not an immediate success and his second, a Latin styled 'Go chase a moonbeam', did little better. No doubt Decca were not too bothered when Craig asked to be released from his contract. He had decided to follow Dick Rowe over to the Top Rank label where Dick was now in charge of recording. Craig's first disc for the label was 'Come softly to me', a big hit at home and over here for the American singing trio The Fleetwoods. It did well but not well enough to join the Frankie Vaughan & Kaye Sisters version in the charts. His next, 'A teenager in love', another cover of a U.S original (this time Dion and the Belmonts) was issued in May 1959 and this finally put him on the hit parade ladder and it climbed to a high point of No.13 early in August.

By now Craig was becoming a familiar face on television. During the winter months he had been part of B.B.C producer Russell Turner's attempt to re-vamp 'Six Five Special'. He'd also made several appearances on 'Cool For Cats' and been a guest on other shows.

With 'A teenager in love' still riding high, Top Rank issued his next disc 'Only sixteen', that quickly proceeded sky-wards hovering at No. 2 for a couple of weeks before knocking Cliff

Richard's 'Living doll' off top spot in mid-September, taking the position over for four weeks. Top Rank Records, no doubt overjoyed (it was their first No.1 too), went to even greater heights promoting the disc by advertising it with sky writing above the holiday resorts of Ramsgate and Margate and across South London.

Now hot property, Craig began his first variety tour on 7th September 1959 at Cardiff and appeared as guest star in 'Aladdin' at several theatres during December and January. Another tour came in early 1960, mainly one night stands with The Mudlarks, who were now supporting him.

Craig sang 'Rainbows' and 'Ring-a-ding day' in the 1960 pop movie 'It's Trad Dad' in which he starred with Helen Shapiro. He also sang 'Change Of Heart' and 'Another you' in the 1962 film 'The Painted Smile'.

Never really a rocker, his style soon mellowed even more with songs like 'Pretty blue eyes', a cover of a Stateside hit for Steve Lawrence, that took Craig almost back up on top reaching No.4 in late February 1960. Also charting during the year was 'The heart of a teenage girl' that entered the 'New Musical Express' Top Thirty right up at No.14 the first week of May, but never got any higher. Craig's first hit of 1961, once again a cover of an American original - Gene McDaniels 'A hundred pounds of clay' - had to be recorded twice because the B.B.C objected to the religious tone of the first disc. Between them the two versions (both were available) made it to No.7. Craig had two more chart hits on Top Rank, 'Time' and 'When my little girl is smiling', followed by 'Our favourite melodies', his only Columbia disc. Back on Decca in 1962, he chalked up a further two hits, 'Oh lonesome me' and 'Town crier'.

Craig continued to play summer seasons, tour in cabaret and was on some of the later 'Sing It Again' broadcasts. His performance on ATV-TV's 'Thank Your Lucky Stars' on 16th November 1963 was billed as his 100th television appearance. He did a lot of work abroad and is still working. He has also done quite a bit of pantomime and was King Burger (get it?) in Gravesend's Woodville Halls 1995 production of 'Sleeping Beauty'. Craig recently joined his old contemporary Helen Shapiro on a nostalgia tour.

Craig Douglas Recordings  
DECCA

F 11055 Aug 58 'Sitting in a tree house / Nothin' shakin'  
F 11075 Oct 58 'Go chase a moonbeam / Are you really mine'

TOP RANK

JAR110 Apl 59 'Come softly to me / Golden girl'  
JAR133 May59 'A teenager in love / The 39 steps'  
JAR159 Jly 59 'Only sixteen / My first love affair'  
(acc by

Harry

Robinson orch)

JAR204 Oct 59 'The riddle of love / Wish it were me' (HRO)  
JAR268 Jan 60 'Pretty blue eyes / Sandy' (acc by HRO)

JAR340 Apl 60 'Heart of a teenage girl / New boy' (acc by

Bob

Sharples orch)

JAR406 Jly 60 'Oh what a day / Why, why, why'  
JAR515 Oct 60 'My hour of love / Where's the girl'  
JAR543 Feb 61 'The girl next door / Hey Mister Conscience'  
JAR555 Apl 61 'A hundred pounds of clay / Hello spring'  
JAR556 Apl 61 'A hundred pounds of clay / Hello spring'  
JAR569 Jun 61 'After all / Time'  
JAR589 Nov 61 'We'll have a lot to tell the children' (acc by

Harry Robinson orch) / No

greater love

(acc by Norrie Paramor

orch)

JAR603 Feb 62 'A change of heart / Another you'  
JAR610 Mar 62 'When my little girl is smiling / Ring-a-ding'  
TR 5004 'Dream lover' (plus other artists)

COLUMBIA

DB 4854 May62 'Our favourite melodies / Rainbows' (acc by

Norrie

Paramor orch)  
DECCA

F 11523 Oct 62 'Oh lonesome me / Please don't take my heart'  
F 11575 Jan 63 'I'd be smiling now / Town crier'  
F 11665 May63 'Danke schoen / Teenage Mona Lisa'  
F 11722 Aug 63 'I'm so glad I found her / Love her while

she's young'

F 11763 Oct 63 'From Russia With Love theme / Counting up

the kisses'

FONTANA

TF 458 Apl 64 'Love leave me alone / Silly boy'  
TF 475 Jun 64 (and The Tridents) 'She's smiling at me /

Come closer'

TF 525 Jan 65 'Across the street / Party girl'  
TF 580 Jun 65 'Around the corner / Find that girl'  
TF 690 Apl 66 'I'm on the outside looking in / Knock on

any door'  
PYE

7N17746 69 'How do you feel about that / Then'

7N17863 69 'Raindrops keep falling on my head /

Don't

mind if I cry'  
CRYSTAL

CR 7011 73 'All kinds of people / Evenin' rain'

CUBE

BUG 72 76 'Who's sorry now / From both sides now'

BUG 76 77 'Turn away / Baby blue'

## Johnny DOUGLAS

Well remembered as a name on Decca record labels of the fifties, Johnny's orchestra did the backing for artists like Lita Roza, Joan Regan, Dickie Valentine, The Johnston Brothers and many more.

Johnny, born at Hackney, east London on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1920, was already proficient on piano and accordion by the time he left school. Having played semi-pro in several local bands, he took up arranging seriously during his service days in the R.A.F after a car accident badly injured his arm, inhibiting his playing. In 1944 he won the Melody Maker Jazz Jamboree "best dance band composition" award for his tune 'Business unusual'.

After the war he played accordion in a band led by guitarist Howard Lucraft and arranged for several bands including George Elrick, Ambrose Ted Heath and Harry Parry. He was also for a time pianist arranger with Cyril Stapleton's Orchestra.

In 1949 Johnny played accordion in a jazz group that recorded several numbers on the Bosworth label. The group, led by guitarist Howard Lucraft, included Freddy Gardner on tenor sax. and Steve Race on piano. Around the same time he arranged and conducted a large concert orchestra for an album release by RCA, the first of numerous recordings he made on that label.

By the early fifties Johnny had become one of the busiest arranger conductors at Decca Records, where as well as his backing duties he also made a number of non vocal singles and albums. During 1955 he led a 16 piece orchestra for a radio series 'In the Still of the Night' reported as his first bandleading venture outside of a recording studio.

During the sixties he moved into film music and wrote the score for several, including the 1965 sic-fi, 'Crack In The World' putting the title song onto disc. He later ran his own recording company, Dulcima Records, and made several CD's for the label.

During his latter years Johnny battled against prostrate cancer, a battle he finally lost Easter Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2003.

Johnny Douglas Orchestra Recordings  
(not including vocal backing sides)  
DECCA

F 10276 Mar 54 'Ballet of the bells / Solfeggio'  
F 10615 Sep 55 'Three gallons / Yesterdays'  
F 10764 Jul 56 'By the fountains of Rome /  
Ballet of

Madeira'  
H.M.V

POP 1276 64 'Hot enough for June / Hi Jackers  
theme'

R.C.A.

RCA 1444 65 'Crack in the world / Time'

## Leslie DOUGLAS

Leslie, originally a vocalist, recorded with the bands of Charlie Kunz, Teddy Joyce, Bertini and Henry Hall during the 1930's. In the early forties he also sang with Ambrose and Carroll Gibbon's Savoy Orpheans, but during wartime service in R.A.F. Bomber Command formed his own dance orchestra. The unit continued into civvy street, where the vocalists were himself and Pearl Carr, with Cliff Adams, (later to lead

his singers through many a simple song) as pianist-arranger. This was quite a showband, Douglas himself being a great performer and his drummer Sammy Herman something of a comedian.

As well as appearing at home the band toured service camps abroad and had many recording and broadcast dates. They were certainly a popular and busy outfit, as the following itinerary for ten days in January 1948 indicates: (having only arrived back in London from a hectic 12 week tour of Germany on Monday 29th December, followed by the Chelsea Arts Ball on New Years Eve and some TV work) on Friday 2nd January they were the main band at Weston-Super-Mare Arts Ball : Saturday 3rd they rushed over to Ramsgate to play for dancers at the Coronation Ballroom : Sunday 4th, all the way back west to Cardiff for a concert at the Odeon : Monday 5th, they travel north to play at both Leeds Town Hall and Huddersfield Town Hall : Tuesday 6th, Bolton and Rochdale : Wednesday 7th, Nelson Imperial Ballroom and Keighley Municipal Hall : Thursday 8th, Bradford Kings Hall and Dewsbury Town Hall - Phew! : on Friday a rest! (not a day off, but just one venue) Stockport Town Hall : on Saturday they travelled south for a dance at Tunbridge Wells : on Sunday 11th they headed west again for a concert at Bristol Embassy Cinema : on Monday they were back in London for a broadcast at 5.45pm. After that the band took the rest of the week as holiday - I think they deserved it!

Pearl Carr left the band during 1948, replaced by Linda Gray who before the year was out had given way to 18 year old Joan Baxter, a winner of Butlin's 'Golden Voice' contest.

For the winter months of 1948-49 the band took up residency at Birmingham's Tower Ballroom and throughout the late forties and early fifties continued playing one night stands and regular seasons at dance halls up and down the land. These included Nottingham's Astoria Ballroom in 1954 where the vocalists were Nan Shaw and Jimmy Day.

The orchestra broadcast on 'Music While You Work', 'Dancing By The Sea' (during their summer seasons at Southport Floral Hall) etc. while Leslie himself also aired as a solo vocalist with other leaders including Peter Yorke on his 'Sweet and Lovely' series and had a spell as a member of the 'Sing It Again' team.

Summer seasons during the mid-fifties were spent at Butlin's Pwllheli Holiday Camp. Nan decided not to take the trip to Pwllheli in 1955 and was replaced by Jean Stuart. During the winter you could usually find Leslie and his Orchestra playing for dancers at the Samson & Hercules Ballroom in Norwich. He continued to broadcast on programmes like 'Time to Dance' and 'Round Britain in Song and Dance'.

Dance hall residencies and regular summer seasons at Butlin's or Bridlington Spa Royal Hall, interlaced with tours at home and abroad, seemed to keep Leslie busy well into the sixties. In later years he ran a band agency from his home in Surrey.

Leslie Douglas Recordings (not complete)

COLUMBIA (vocal with Carroll Gibbons Savoy  
Orpheans)



FB 2985 Jan 44 'Pedro the fisherman / For the first time'  
 FB 2986 Jan 44 'Hold back the dawn / My British buddy'  
 FB 2992 Feb 44 'Paper doll'  
 FB 2993 Feb 44 'How sweet you are'  
 FB 3000 Mar 44 'By the river of the roses'  
 FB 3001 Mar 44 'I'm getting tired so I can sleep'  
 FB 3012 Apr 44 'Hey good-looking'  
 FB 3013 Apr 44 'Mairzy doats and dozy doats'  
 FB 3017 May 44 'Sitting on a cloud'  
 FB 3018 May 44 'Amor amor'  
 FB 3023 Jun 44 'I'll get by'  
 FB 3024 Jun 44 'Goodnight darling'  
 FB 3030 Jly 44 'There's nothing like music'  
 FB 3038 Jly 44 'Now I know / Someday I'll meet you again'  
 FB 3046 Aug 44 'Swinging on a star / San Fernando Valley'  
 FB 3061 Oct 44 'Sweet and lovely / Forget-me-nots in your eyes'  
 FB 3068 Nov 44 'I'll be around / When they ask about you'  
 FB 3069 Nov 44 'Let me love you tonight'  
 FB 3077 Jan 45 'Come out come out wherever you are / My favourite dream'  
 FB 3078 Jan 45 'Don't you know I care'  
 FB 3088 Feb 45 'The happiest New Year of all'  
 FB 3089 Feb 45 'Texas polka'  
 FB 3094 Mar 45 'I'll remember April / (with Gwen Joans) While we're young'  
 REGAL ZONOPHONE (Leslie Douglas Orchestra)  
 MR 3792 Aug 47 'Down the old Spanish trail (v. Leslie Douglas) / Huggin` and chalkin` (v. LD & Serenaders)'  
 MR 3793 Sep 47 'Bye bye blackbird (v. Serenaders) / I'm afraid to love you (v. Pearl Carr & S)'  
 MR 3797 Dec 47 'Don`t dilly dally on the way / Honeysuckle and the bee' (both v. Pearl Carr)  
 MR 3804 May 48 'Nursery Rhymes selection'

## Betty DRIVER

A performer from the age of nine, Elizabeth Driver was born in Leicester on 20th May 1921, the daughter of a policeman and much encouraged by her mother Nell, a proficient pianist, began her own professional career in variety at the age of 10. By 1935 she was starring in 'Mr. Tower of London' the musical that launched Gracie Fields. The late 1930's also saw her much in demand as a band singer, often appearing with Henry Hall. An all round entertainer, she added dancing and comedy to her vocalising and appeared regularly in variety playing several summer seasons at Blackpool during the forties.

Betty should have been seen singing and dancing in George Formby's first film 'Boots Boots' in 1934 and is listed in the credits, but George's wife Beryl was jealous (Betty was quite a beauty

in her youth) and had her thrown out. So she had to wait until 1938 for her film debut in Basil Dean's 'Penny Paradise', a story set in Liverpool Docks and featuring the Irish comedian Jimmy O`Dea. She joined O`Dea again a year later for her second film 'Let's be Famous' in which she plays a choir girl who wins a crooning contest, much to her family's disapproval.

During the forties Betty entertained troops as a member of ENSA. She broadcast regularly on programmes like 'Music Hall', 'Variety Fanfare', 'Henry Hall's Guest Night' and her own series 'A Date With Betty' that was first broadcast on the Home Service on Thursday 14th July 1949. It was on this series that she met her future husband, one member of a South African musical trio The Petersen Brothers. Betty and Wally Petersen married on 19th December 1952.

Soon after the wedding Betty was back touring variety theatres in a show called 'Television Highlights' that included comedy magician Tommy Cooper and ace trumpet player Kenny Baker. A couple of years later, described as "a vivacious songstress with that extra something", she was topping the bill across the country in 'The Betty Driver Show' that included her husband Wally (who had softened his surname to Peterson) with his brothers Andy and Basil on guitar and bass plus Reg Hoskins on piano, providing her musical rhythm backing. The act was said to be fast moving, with solid singing and lots of humour. Later Wally returned to South Africa taking Betty with him. But she later claimed that all he was interested in was her money and so the marriage broke up.

Back in the UK Betty was soon once again touring continually and widely in variety, but with the advent of rock and roll during the late fifties decided she was "fed up with the way music was going" and began to look towards the straight theatre. In 1958 she appeared in a touring version of the popular play 'The Lovebirds', although she did comment that "singing had been a lot easier". She was on television in 'Love on the Dole' with James Bolam and in 1966 appeared in Granada Television's series 'Pardon the Expression' with Arthur Lowe playing his Arthur Swindley 'Coronation Street' role.

Betty then more or less retired from show business, becoming joint landlady, with her sister Freda, of The Cock Hotel in Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire. One customer, 'Coronation Street' producer Harry Kershaw, thought she fitted the role so well he invited her to join the cast of the television series, playing the part of Rovers Return barmaid Betty Turpin. First appearing on 2nd June 1969 it was role she was still playing 42 years later. Betty was awarded an MBE in the 2000 honours list. She died following a short illness, aged 91, on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

Betty began recording around the mid-thirties and I've listed those 78's I know of.

### Betty Driver Recordings

H.M.V.

BD 530 Apr 38 'I'm getting sentimental over you / With you'  
 BD 545 May 38 'I love to whistle / I'll take romance'  
 BD 556 Jun 38 'I fall in love with you everyday / The sweetest song in

the world'  
 BD 575 Aug 38 'So little time / Oh! Ma, Ma!'  
 BD 605 Nov 38 'Red maple leaves / What goes on in  
 my heart'  
 BD 686 May 39 'I've got a hunch / The moon  
 remembered'

#### REGAL ZONOPHONE

MR 3593 42 'Swing bugler / The world will  
 sing again'  
 MR 3657 Oct 42 'Betty Driver medley'  
 MR 3674 Feb 43 'Twitterpated / We mustn't miss  
 the last  
 bus home'  
 H.M.V.

B 9825 Oct 49 'Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday / The  
 bullfrog'

(acc by Frank

*Cordell Orch)*

B 9834 Nov 49 'A dreamer's holiday / Leprechaun  
 lullaby'

(acc by Frank

*Cordell Orch)*

BD 6086 Feb 51 (with Sid Phillips band) 'Red silken  
 stockings'

#### PLANET

? Jly 54 'I know you're mine'

## Cuddly DUDLEY

A Jamaican, Cuddly (real name, Dudley Heslop,  
 born 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1930) came to Britain in 1947. He  
 spent three years touring with Sid Millwards  
 Nitwits and in the early fifties was a member of  
 The Sepia Five, a British "West Indian" vocal  
 group that also included Angela Freeman, Teddy  
 Gordon, Don Fritz and Tony Johnson.

Already a performer in his native country, with a  
 singing, drumming and dance act, he had first  
 appeared in public at the age of ten. Early  
 bookings here included a spot in the revue  
 'Sauce Tartare' at the Cambridge Theatre,  
 followed by a long run in 'Folies Bergere' at the  
 London Hippodrome. Other work included a tour  
 of Australia and appearances on the Continent.

In 1958 he was picked as one of the regulars for  
 a new I.T.V. pop series 'Oh Boy' and it was here  
 he acquired the name Cuddly, although he said  
 he preferred using his real name. On the  
 strength of his television appearances he joined  
 some touring rock packages and had a singing  
 role in the 1960 film 'Girls in the Latin Quarter'.  
 The same year he toured with The Platters on  
 their U.K. visit.

When all the fuss had died down Dudley reverted  
 to touring in cabaret backed by his own  
 instrumental group The Embraceable Four.

#### Cuddly Dudley Recordings

#### ESQUIRE (The Sepia Five)

5-053 Jan 54 'Let's go hunting / Mango time'  
 5-058 Jan 54 'Ball game / Trad West Indian folk  
 music'

(both recorded Nov 51 acc by

Pete

Pitterson and his West

Indians)

H.M.V

POP 586 59 'Lots more love / Later (acc by  
 Harry Robinson

*orch)*

POP 725 60 'Too pooped to pop / Miss In-  
 between'

#### EMBER (Cuddly Dudley & The Redcaps)

EMBS136 Aug 61 'Sitting in a train / One that I  
 like'.

#### PICCADILLY

7N35090 Dec 62 'The ferryboat ride / Monkey  
 party'

#### ORIOLE (both have Betty Taylor on reverse)

ICB 9 Feb 64 'Blarney blues'

ICB 10 May 64 'Way of life'

## Johnny DUNCAN

During the late fifties, when many British  
 singers were doing their best to copy the  
 American Country & Western style music, it was  
 noticeable that one of them was a natural; he  
 was of course Johnny Duncan.

Johnny, born 7<sup>th</sup> September 1932, had an  
 advantage, he was a native of Oliver Springs,  
 Knoxville, Tennessee, where as a youngster he  
 sang and played guitar in a quartet at the local  
 church hall. In 1947, aged sixteen, he toured  
 Texas as part of a Hill Billy trio, later moving on  
 to Kentucky where he became one of Bill  
 Monroe's famous Kentucky Blue Grass Boys,  
 until Uncle Sam called him up and as a  
 serviceman he came to England.

Stationed with the American Army at  
 Molesworth, Huntingdon, he met a waitress at a  
 local cafe named Betty and on the 4th July 1953  
 they were married. When Johnny was due for  
 demob in October 1954 the family, for there was  
 now also young Julie Anne, all returned to the  
 States. Back home Johnny formed his own group  
 The Tennessee Ramblers and continued his show  
 business career.

In December 1955 Betty, with daughter Julie,  
 came over to spend Christmas with her parents,  
 but unfortunately while here she became very ill.  
 Johnny rushed over from the U.S. where he was  
 working. An operation was needed and some  
 lengthy convalescence, so he began to look for a  
 job here.

For a while he helped on his father-in-law's  
 clothing stall in Huntingdon market, but on  
 hearing that Lonnie Donegan was leaving Chris  
 Barber's band decided to try for the vacancy.  
 Learning the band was playing at the Humphrey  
 Lyttleton Club in London he went there and  
 asked for an audition. Needless to say, he got  
 the job and became the new skiffle group leader  
 within the band.

After about a year during which he made  
 several broadcasts with the Barber band  
 including a regular Monday evening Radio  
 Luxembourg series 'Your Nine O'clock Date',  
 Johnny left Chris to go it alone. He formed his  
 Blue Grass Boys, a skiffle come country and  
 western outfit featuring Johnny on guitar,  
 mandolin and vocals with Brian Daly guitar, Jack  
 Fallon bass and Lennie Hastings on drums. They  
 made their first record, 'Kaw-Liga', a Hank

Williams hit from a few years back, for Columbia on 22nd February 1957.

Their debut concert was at Leeds City Hall on 3rd March, although Johnny had fronted a group in variety a week earlier at the Nottingham Empire, when Lonnie Donegan was taken ill and at short notice Johnny travelled up from London to take over.

The Blue Grass Boys toured in variety and one night stands and did radio and television on 'Skiffle Club', 'Six Five Special' etc. Their second record 'Last Train to San Fernando', issued in June 1957 became probably their best remembered and certainly most successful chart entry. On the 'New Musical Express' best sellers list for 17 weeks, it had, by mid-September, almost made the top being at No.2 position, only held back by Paul Anka's 'Diana' which hogged the No.1 spot for nine weeks.

On Bank Holiday Monday, 5th August, Johnny was signed by the BBC for a one-off disc jockey broadcast, playing the records of Country and Western artists he had known. The success of this show led to his later D.J. series 'Johnny Duncan's Tennessee Song Bag' that ran on the Light Programme from November 1957.

The Blue Grass Boys were an odd choice for a 28 week Radio Luxembourg series called 'Your Sunday Valentine' sponsored by 'Valentine' girls' magazine. More suited was "heart-throb" singer Dennis Lotis who was also on the show that ran from 8th September 1957.

On 14th October Johnny and his Boys were at the Royal Albert Hall in 'Skiffle Jamboree' along with the groups of Cy Laurie, Bob Cort and the Cotton Pickers, although it was now Johnny's aim to broaden his music policy away from skiffle. The same month 'Blue Blue Heartaches', their third disc, made No.27 on the chart for just one week, and in November 'Footprints in the Snow', from their next release, did exactly the same.

In January 1958 bassist Jack Fallon, who had also been managing the group, left to concentrate on his agency business in London. The Boys set off on a new variety tour, began a Radio Luxembourg series 'Cream of the Pops' with singer Glen Mason, appeared on ITV's 'Jack Jackson Show' on Saturday 18th and were on BBC TV's 'Six Five Special' the following Saturday.

Times were obviously good and Johnny bought himself a £1,700 German Borgward Isabella motor car (at the time Austin's top of the range 'Westminster' cost about £1,000). He also bought a Huntingdon manor house standing in extensive grounds that his wife had always admired as a child. A year later after writing off the Borgward, when it skidded into a ditch, he went straight out and bought another one.

The group were extremely popular with young fans and when leaving functions Johnny and his Boys were often mobbed by crowds of them. On one such occasion during February he broke a bone in his foot when he jumped over a wall to escape and had to appear on 'Six Five Special' on 15th February with his foot in plaster.

During April and May 1958 the Blue Grass Boys were part of the Marvin Rainwater (riding on the crest of his No.1 'Whole Lotta Woman'

success) package touring Britain, setting off from Manchester on 21st April. On 4th October 1958 the Boys were on the first ever radio 'Saturday Club' a two hour show from 10.00am till noon, with Brian Matthew introducing "the best of today's pop entertainment". A very popular programme it ran until 1969.

Johnny and the Blue Grass Boys still toured, mainly with rock package shows and did one night stands at U.S. bases with great popularity throughout the sixties. In 1961 the line up was Johnny with Kenny Packwood guitar, Red Reece drums and Tex Makins bass, who as The Quiet Three had previously toured with Vince Eager.

Come the seventies Johnny moved to Australia, where he continued to perform. Confusingly, back in the U.S. another country and western - pop singer, who also worked under the name Johnny Duncan, came to prominence during the 1970's when he had several successful recordings.

Johnny, of Blue Grass fame, died of cancer at Taree, New South Wales, on 15th July 2000. His American namesake died of a heart-attack on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2006 in Texas.

#### Johnny Duncan and his Blue Grass Boys Recordings

##### COLUMBIA

DB 3925	Apl 57	'Kaw-liga / Ella speed'	
DB 3959	Jun 57	'Last train to San Fernando /	Rock-a-billy
		baby'	
DB 3996	Sep 57	'Blue blue heartaches / Jig along	
		home'	
DB 4029	Dec 57	'Get along home Cindy /	Footprints in the
		snow'	
DB 4074	Feb 58	'Goodnight Irene / If you love me	
		baby'	
DB 4118	May 58	'Itching for my baby /	I heard the
		bluebirds sing'	
DB 4167	Jly 58	'All of the monkeys ain't in the zoo /	More
		and more'	
DB 4179	Aug 58	'Geisha girl / My lucky love'	(with The Polka
		Dots)	
DB 4282	Mar 59	'This train / Rosalie'	
DB 4311	May 59	'Kansas City / That's all right	
		honey'	
DB 4415	Mar 60	(just Johnny Duncan) 'Any time /	Yellow
		yellow moon'	
DB 7164	Nov 63	(with the Kingpins) 'Will you be	
		mine /	The ballad of Jed
Clampett'			
DB 7334	64	(just Johnny Duncan) 'Which way did	
		he go /	
Dang me'			
DB 7833	66	" "	'My little baby /
			I thank my
lucky stars'			

(all following are Johnny Duncan with orch)

##### PYE

7N15358	Jun 61	'Sleepy eyed John / Tobacco	
Road'			
7N15380	Oct 61	'The legend of Gungda Din /	
Hannah'			
7N15420	Apl 62	'Long time gone / Waiting for	
sandman'			

C.B.S.  
 13-33250 75 'Sweet country woman / Here we go again'  
 4564 76 'Silent neon sign / Stranger'  
 5184 77 'It couldn't have been any better /  
 Denver woman'  
 E.M.I.  
 EMI 2465 76 'Last train to San Fernando / Long gone  
 lonesome blues'  
 ARISTA  
 ARIST 128 77 'Throw him in jail / Street strutter'  
 ARIST 145 77 'Where's the show? / Hang around'

BD 1269 Mar 51 'The roving kind / I do, do, do like you' (with  
*Geraldine Farrar & The Tanner sisters)*  
 BD 6095 Jun 51 'On top of old smokey (with *The Song Pedlars*) / It's gonna be too late  
 (with *Stella Tanner*)  
 BD 6100 Jly 51 'Ivory rag / When you and I were young  
 Maggie blues (with *The Song Pedlars*)  
 BD 6103 Aug 51 'Ain't nobody here but us chickens'  
 BD 6106 Sep 51 'The black note serenade / Vampin''  
 BD 6107 Oct 51 'Shanghai / Kissing bug boogie'  
 BD 6111 Nov 51 'That ever-lovin' rag'  
 BD 6114 Dec 51 'Down yonder'

## Vince EAGER

One of Larry Parnes' stable of rock and roll artists, six foot three and ruggedly good looking Vince was really Roy Taylor, a former woodworker from Grantham, Lincolnshire.

As young teenagers, Roy and two friends Roy Clark and Brian Locking had formed a group, The Harmonica Vagabonds, playing at local clubs and dance halls. The arrival of Skiffle brought a change of direction and a new member, Mick Fretwell on washboard and drums, and as The Vagabonds with Brian on bass and both Roys on guitar and vocals they came second in the World Skiffle Championships. Just one of the many dubious competitions of the skiffle era, but it was televised and resulted in an invitation to appear at the Two I's coffee bar in London.

Early 1958 Larry Parnes, already managing Tommy Steele, gave them a spot on one of his Sunday concerts, liked seventeen year old Roy's husky voice, with what has been described as a most unusual quaver, and signed him up. Brian 'Liquorice' Locking went on to work with Marty Wilde and Cliff Richard while Mick Fretwell and Roy Clark decided to return to a normal life in Grantham. The original Vagabonds did finally get together again for reunion concerts in 2000 and 2003.

At Parnes suggestion Roy adopted the name Vince Eager and a test recording was sent to Decca's Dick Rowe. Given his own backing group, aptly named the Vagabonds, he is reported to have cut six titles for Decca, with the first disc coupling 'Yea yea' with either 'Tread softly stranger' or 'Gum drop' scheduled for release as F11023 in May. But for some unknown reason it was withdrawn and Vince never did appear on a Decca single, although they did later issue him on an EP.

Better things happened over at Parlophone though, with a cover of Gene Vincent's 'Five days, five days' backed with 'No more' out in October. In the meantime Vince had made several appearances on TV's 'Six Five Special'. A try out in variety, with a week at Middlesbrough Empire from Monday 19th May 1958, was soon followed by a reported £3,000 fee for a ten week tour of the Continent, beginning 12th July at Pepi's Strello Club, San Remo, Italy. TV and radio dates in Rome, Milan, Paris and Brussels were included.

When Jack Good cast ITV's new teenage show 'Oh Boy' in October 1958, Vince became

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## Johnnie EAGER

Although remembered as a vocalist, Johnnie entered show-business as a dancer and in 1938, at the age of 14, was in the chorus of the Crazy Gang show 'These Foolish Things' at the London Palladium. He also appeared in Revudeville at the Windmill Theatre. It was a broken leg that eventually made him concentrate on singing.

During the post war forties and early fifties Johnnie toured as vocalist with the Sid Phillips Band. He was one of the singers on the very first 'Sing It Again' broadcast on Wednesday 19th January 1949 and made an early appearance on television, in 'New Songs For Old' on Whit Monday 6th June 1949, singing and tap-dancing.

By 1952 he had left Sid Phillips to freelance and made several appearances with Ted Heath's Orchestra, plus West End cabaret etc. He later toured in musical comedy. Johnnie's only recordings seem to be those he made with Sid Phillips.

### Johnny Eager Recordings

H.M.V. (with *Sid Phillips Band*)  
 BD 6050 Sep 49 'Just one of those things'  
 BD 6053 Oct 49 'Oh dear, what can the matter be (with *Jill Allan*)'  
 BD 6059 Feb 50 'Be goody good good to me (with *Jill Allan*)'  
 BD 6061 Mar 50 'Frankie and Johnnie'  
 B 9930 Jun 50 'Ain't she sweet'  
 B 9940 Aug 50 'When the saints go marching in'  
 BD 6074 Sep 50 'Silver dollar / Tzena tzena tzena' (with *The Tanner Sisters*)  
 BD 6077 Nov 50 'Three little words'  
 BD 6078 Nov 50 'Rikki tikki toon (with *Geraldine Farrar*) /  
 English  
 beauty rose'  
 BD 6081 Dec 50 'The trouble with love is love (with *G.F.*) /  
 When that harvest moon is  
 shining'  
 BD 6086 Feb 51 'Deed I do (with *Geraldine Farrar*)'

one of the regulars. He closed his first year in show business playing in the panto 'Mother Goose' at Southport's Garrick Theatre.

Early 1959 brought a new disc from Parlophone. Vince did more touring, mainly one night stands in rock package shows around the dance halls, small theatres and cinemas. He was now resident on 'Drumbeat', BBC TV's Saturday evening pop show, making a name for himself as an Elvis Presley clone.

Vince never did have a hit record. Given the image of a rock singer he was really more of a balladeer, somewhat lost in an age of rockers. Possibly his most popular disc was the quite charming 'Primrose Lane' (a million seller for American singer Jerry Wallace), his first side for Top Rank.

Failing to follow other Parnes prodigies, Tommy Steele and Marty Wilde into the big time, Eager eventually left and went his own way, touring clubs singing the old rock numbers, proving what a great live performer he was. He did some panto and also played Elvis Prestley in tribute shows, including five years in the West End musical 'Elvis'.

In 2000 Rollercoaster Records issued an E.P. of four private recordings made by the Vagabonds skiffle group during the fifties. Titles are 'Money honey' / 'My Dixie darling' / 'Cotton fields' / 'Be bop a lu-la'.

#### Vince Eager Recordings

##### PARLOPHONE

R 4482 Oct 58 'Five days, five days / No more'

R 4531 Feb 59 'The railroad song / When's your

birthday baby'

R 4550 May 59 'No other arms, no other lips / This should go

on forever'

##### TOP RANK

JAR 191 Sep 59 'Primrose lane / Makin' love'

JAR 275 Jan 60 'Why / El Paso' (*acc by Johnny Douglas orch*)

JAR 307 Feb 60 'No love have I / Lonely blue boy'

JAR 539 Feb 61 'Love my life away / I know what I want'

JAR 593 Nov 61 'The world's loneliest man / Created

in a dream'

##### PICCADILLY

7N35110 Mar 63 'Any time is the right time / Heavenly'

7N35157 Feb 64 'It's only make believe / I shall not be moved'

## Robert EARL

An East End lad, born just off the Whitechapel Road on 17th November 1926, Robert Earl set his sights on a singing career before leaving school. It turned out to be a long uphill struggle, with Bob never quite getting the full recognition he deserved. Although he produced a list of first rate singles (reviewer Jack Bentley once described his voice as "like David Whitfield, but a lot more in tune") from 1953 on, it was late in that decade before he had the satisfaction of a chart success.

A member of Stamford Hill youth club, Bob

played and sang in concerts there. Later he graduated to appearing at local clubs and functions for a few shillings a time, although he says he would have done it for nothing so much did he enjoy singing.

With school behind him, Bob went to work in his uncle's fashion business, training to become a designer while continuing to pursue his vocal ambitions. Most evenings would find him working with a dance band somewhere around London. During the forties (declared unfit for military service himself) he appeared at a lot of troop concerts and secured cabaret bookings at night spots like Murray's, The Astor and Queens Club.

With all this nocturnal activity it's not surprising the day job began to suffer and his uncle suggested it was time he made the choice between a promising future in the rag trade or an uncertain one in show business. Of course, for Bob there was only one choice and he took the latter. The year was 1950 and so began the hard slog of making a name for himself. Luckily he now had the support of Daphne who he had married in June 1947.

Sessions with the bands of Sydney Lipton, Nat Temple and Maurice Winnick helped keep him going as he gave numerous auditions for record companies. It was Norman Newell at the newly formed Philips label who finally gave him a chance with his first disc in October 1953. 'If you love me' a new song supplied by a friendly publisher for Bob's audition, became 'B' side to 'Crying in the chapel'. Although well received 'Chapel' was overshadowed by the Lee Lawrence version. His second attempt the following January coupling 'Timber' with 'You alone', despite demonstrating his vocal range did little for sales. But neither Robert nor Philips gave up and more recordings followed, 'The book' a big one for David Whitfield was out in February and 'My son, my son' that put Vera Lynn on top came along in September.

By now theatre agents were familiar enough with the Earl name to take him seriously. A trial week at Middlesborough Empire from Monday 15th November 1954 resulted in a full tour during early 1955. Bob was billed as "The English Mario Lanza". On BBC TV's 'Off the Record' on 21st November 1955 he sang his latest disc 'He' and live from the Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia on ITV's 'On the Town' show the following March he was plugging 'Now and Forever'. Other radio and television work kept him busy. This included a Radio Luxemburg series 'Your Picture Show' with singer Diana Coupland and the Jackie Brown Orchestra, sponsored by Picture Show magazine.

Still waiting for that 'big one' on record, he continued to appear in cabaret and variety, never quite making top of the bill but always a popular support artist. His April 1957 recording of 'All' was a bit of an oddity. The song had been featured on the BBC's Festival of Popular Song, a market place for many new songs including this one. The public liked it and began buying the sheet music in sufficient quantity to put it onto the music publishers' Top Twenty list by mid-March. At that time Radio Luxemburg used the sheet music charts for its own Top Twenty show each week. With 'All' now on that chart,

there was no recording of it available, so a hurriedly convened session was arranged for Bob to put it on disc. Other than a version by Victor Silvester his was the only recording of the song to be issued.

Summer 1957 found Robert appearing on his first big seaside season from early June, in the 'Big Splash Aqua Show' at Blackpool's Derby Baths.

In late 1956 Bob had taken the song 'Garden of Eden' to Philips A & R man Johnny Franz hoping to record it, but it was given to Frankie Vaughan. So it was no doubt with some trepidation that he brought details of 'I may never pass this way again' back from a visit to the States. There he had heard Perry Como sing it on his T.V. show and straight away he asked to record it. Even this was delayed by the publishers to allow Como the option of recording it first. It was well worth the wait for it became Bob's first chart entry, reaching No.14 during May 1958. No one hit wonder either, now he'd discovered the secret Bob made it a hat trick. 'More than ever' (or to some, 'Come prima') just made the Top Thirty at No.26 in November (it was Malcolm Vaughan who took most of the sales with that one though) while 'The wonderful secret of love' did much better, reaching No.17 the following March.

Now suddenly elevated to the big time, Bob decided to brush up his stage image. Often he had been accused of having a great voice but no stage personality, saying little more than "good evening ladies and gentlemen" and "thank you very much". To this end he took advice from Mike Sullivan who had done much to shape Shirley Bassey's career and it seemed to work. Appearing at Finsbury Park Empire during July 1959, he was reported as now having an act as presentable as his voice, even joining the audience for a jig in the aisles. Using set changes to suit the music that spanned light opera and the Jolson classics as well as pop, he had a presentation that was faultless, Melody Maker reported.

With variety being taken over by rock and roll acts, it was only summer season and panto that was left. As well as bookings across Europe, during the sixties Robert toured the world doing cabaret aboard cruise liners.

It's probably nice for Bob in his old age to relax and follow the success of his son, also named Robert, listed as one of Britain's richest people (The Sunday Times in April 1997 placed him 19th, being worth £800m), with a catering empire that included a stake in the Planet Hollywood chain of theme restaurants.

Robert Earl Recordings

PHILIPS (acc on most by Wally Stott orch)

PB 185	Oct 53	'Crying in the chapel / If you love me'
PB 228	Jan 54	'Timber / You alone'
PB 238	Feb 54	'The book / Yiddisher tears'
PB 331	Sep 54	'My son, my son / Far away'
PB 406	Feb 55	'Time after time / Face of an angel'
PB 433	Apl 55	'I wonder / My loving hands'
PB 481	Jul 55	'Three galleons / Till the last rose has faded'
PB 517	Oct 55	'He / With your love'
PB 552	Feb 56	'Now and forever / My September love'
PB 593	Jun 56	'If you can dream / Believe in me'

PB 622	Sep 56	'Your home can be a castle / More'
PB 657	Jan 57	'I'm free / The golden key'
PB 684	Apl 57	'All / You alone'
PB 730	Sep 57	'Song of the valley / Fascination'
PB 767	Nov 57	'My special angel / There's only you'
PB 805	Mar 58	'I may never pass this way again / Someone'
PB 867	Oct 58	'More than ever / No one but you'
PB 891	Dec 58	'The wonderful secret of love / The boulevard of

broken dreams'		
PB 927	May 59	'Every day's a wonderful day / Anything'
PB 960	Sep 59	'The key / The test of time'
PB 986	Feb 60	'Oh so wunderbar / I'm rich'
PB 1015	May 60	'Strange and wonderful feeling / Place in

the sun'		
PB 1077	Nov 60	'One of the lucky ones / Wanderlust'
PB 1129	Apl 61	'April serenade / Love me'
PB 1209	Feb 62	'When you're in love / Shalom'
326556	Dec 62	'Lonely / Time will tell'
PB 1289	63	'Falling in love with love / Give me my

chance'		
BF 1379	64	'Walk hand in hand / Never'

## David EDE

After serving with the R.A.F, where he trained as a pilot, David played saxophone and clarinet in the bands of Joe Daniels and Teddy Foster (where, not being a bad vocalist, he was also one of the Down Beaters vocal group) before joining Oscar Rabin in September 1948. It didn't take Oscar long to spot his undoubted talents as an arranger, singer and compere. putting them to good use. Oscar himself had never been keen to front his band and since its formation had left that duty to his long time partner Harry Davis. In 1951, Harry decided to go and live with his daughter in the States and it was to David that Oscar looked for his new front man.

So for most of the fifties, with the band resident at London's prestigious Lyceum Ballroom, many of the dancers listening to the Rabin Band no doubt believed David up there in front was the boss. In fact, as recognition of his service he was made a director of the Rabin Organisation (that also included a booking agency) in 1955.

With the sudden death of Oscar in 1958 the mantle of responsibility for David became more pressing, especially when the band then left the comforts of the Lyceum for the open road and one night stands. It was in December of the same year that the Rabin band began its long running association with the "pop" radio show 'Go Man Go', which David also introduced. Initially on a Monday, it later moved to Friday lunchtime and was broadcast live from London's Playhouse Theatre where each week a long queue of eager youngsters gathered in the hope of being part of the audience. The hour long show included jazz, big band swing, straight ballads and rock and had a regular listening audience of over four million.

Sadly, David's full potential was never achieved for when only 39 he died in a boating accident while the band was enjoying the 1965 summer season at Blackpool. With this loss the band broke up and the Rabin Organisation itself was sold to Mecca in 1968.

Discs by the Oscar Rabin Band dried up

around the mid-fifties, but in the early sixties Pye issued several sides from the David Ede Band, no doubt taking advantage of his radio popularity.

David Ede Band Recordings

PYE

7N15280 Sep 60 'Easy go / The bluebird'  
(next two discs labeled as David Ede & The Go-Man-Go Men)

7N15329 Feb 61 'Obsession / Bootnik'

7N15370 Sep 61 'Ding dong John / Last night'  
(next two discs labeled as David Ede & The Rabin Band)

7N15394 Dec 61 'Twelfth street rag / No hats on Ilkley'

7N15417 Mar 62 'Twistin' those meeces to pieces /

Twistin' the trad'

## Toni EDEN

Daughter of Harold 'Chips' Chippendale, sax player and vocalist with several pre-war bands notably those of Billy Cotton, Sydney Lipton and Carroll Gibbons, Toni (Antoinette) was born in London, but later moved to Liverpool where her father was serving in the army. Her first stage appearance was at the age of three when she sang to 3,000 troops on his camp.

With such a background Toni was always keen to make show business a career. As a young girl she had learned piano, taken drama and ice skating lessons, while only later taking up singing. She is the owner of a rather husky voice (probably because she never stops talking).

In October 1955, just before her sixteenth birthday, Toni, an attractive shapely blonde, secured a year's contract to sing with the famous Ted Heath Orchestra. A great success and at the end of the year she could have stayed, but with the Heath band being so busy the extent of the work involved had strained her voice and she left in order to rest. This she did on a six month visit to friends in Miami.

Back in Britain, Toni did some bookings with the Tommy Whittle group before joining Cliff Adams' Granadiers, a vocal choir at Granada Television. At that time she was the youngest member and stayed with them for over two years, adding vocal harmony to many Granada TV shows.

Toni also made many solo appearances on both television and radio, including 'Nightride', broadcast from January 1959, on which she joined Glen Mason singing the latest pop tunes. From October 1959 she had the vocal spot on a series of radio's 'Take It From Here' and during the early sixties was a regular on Granada TV's 'Song Parade'.

Her first recordings came in 1960 on the Columbia label, but she never made any impact in that medium. During the sixties Toni put her earlier dramatic training to good use concentrating more on the musical comedy stage. She appeared in the Peter Cook revue 'One over the Eight' at the Duke of York Theatre from April 1961, with Lynda Baron, Sheila Hancock, Kenneth Williams and Lance Percival, one of her vocal numbers appearing on one side of a Decca single.

From December 1965, at London's

Shaftesbury Theatre, Toni joined the star studded cast of Long John Baldry, Bernard Bresslaw, Ronnie Corbett, Bob Grant and Barbara Windsor in Lionel Bart's 'Twang'. From October 1969 she was in Bacharach and David's 'Promises Promises' at the Prince Of Wales Theatre.

Toni Eden Recordings

COLUMBIA

DB 4409 Mar 60 'No one understands / Teen street'

DB 4458 Jun 60 'Grown up dreams / Whad'ya gonna do'

DB 4527 Nov 60 'Will I ever / The waiting game'

DECCA

F 11342 Apl 61 'Send me' (from 'One Over The Eight')

UNITED ARTISTS

UP 1117 66 'Dream child / Wander' (both from 'Twang')

UP 1171 67 'Finding you loving you / Shining sea'

## Roy EDWARDS

A former Liverpool gent's outfitter, during which time he won several talent contests with his rich deep voice, Roy took up singing professionally in 1945 working for E.N.S.A. From here he went on to sing with several bands including Oscar Rabin, Felix Mendelssohn and Ken Mackintosh before joining The Squadronaires in 1949, staying four years. When Jimmy Miller left, Roy fronted the band for a while before Ronnie Aldrich gave up the piano stool to take over.

In August 1953 twenty five year old Roy left the Squads to replace Bob Dale with Geraldo's Orchestra, becoming a regular alongside Rosemary Squires on Gerry's 'Tip Top Tunes' radio shows. The following year Roy recorded two discs for the Polygon label backed by the Bruce Campbell Orchestra which appear to be his only singles output, although he had added the vocal on several Squadronaire sides.

During the latter years of the fifties Roy was resident vocalist on the long running daily AR-TV midday show 'Lunch Box' and became very much associated with this programme. His work over the following years is little documented, but I do know he spent at least four summer seasons in the seventies with the Vernon Adcock Orchestra at Weston Super Mare and in more recent years has entertained on cruise liners across the world. During the seventies Roy made at least two Lp's for the Birmingham based 'Grosvenor' label that were available at his shows.

During his latter years, described as a "charming gentleman". Roy returned to live on The Wirral where he died 24<sup>th</sup> May 2010 aged 82.

Roy Edwards Recordings

COLUMBIA (with Felix Mendelssohn Hawaiian Serenaders)

FB 3380 May 48 'The one rose / On Treasure Island'

DECCA (with The Squadronaires)

F 9303 Jan 50 'Jealous heart / Such lovely things are these'

F 9304 Dec 49 'You're breaking my heart /

December'  
 F 9346 Feb 50 'I can dream can't I'  
  
 F 9367 Mar 50 'Ev'ry day I love you (just a little bit more) /  
 Oh!  
 my darling'  
 F 9455 Jun 50 'Sentimental me / I don't wanna be kissed  
 (with Linda & The Quads)  
 F 9461 Jly 50 'I wanna go home with you (with L. & T.Q.)'  
 F 9500 Oct 50 'Have I told you lately that I love you (with The Squads` Choir) / Me and my imagination'  
 F 9818 Jan 52 'Hey good looking'  
 F 9896 Apl 52 'Mistakes / Slow coach'  
 F 9900 May 52 'Wine women and song (with The Squads` Choir)  
 F 10016 Dec 52 'The last waltz'

POLYGON (acc by Bruce Campbell Orch)

P 1104 Mar 54 'From the vine came the grape / I need'  
 P 1140 Nov 54 'Midnight / Romeo and Juliet waltz'

ORIOLE

CB 1322 Mar 56 (with Geraldo Orch) 'There once was a beautiful'

## Linda ELLINGTON

In October 1950 Linda, a native of Scotland, came south for her first professional engagement, as vocalist with the Johnny Dankworth Seven. An audition recording sent to Steve Race had done the trick.

Six months later she was singing with the Kenny Baker All Stars, but this arrangement was just as short lived when Linda left to continue her music studies in London, while appearing in cabaret at the Starlight Club.

Later she worked with the Hedley Ward band and trio, plus several season on the Continent.

## Ray ELLINGTON

Ray, a big man, really was the happy cheerful personality he portrayed on stage and radio. Born 17th March 1916 in South London, his mother was Russian and his father American and he attended a local Jewish school. His show business career began at an early age as a juvenile actor. He had a part in the 1928 musical production 'Virginia' at London's Palace Theatre. During his pre-Quartet days Ray played character parts in several films.

When he left school his mother, considering the stage a chancy profession, persuaded him to join his uncle's business as an apprentice cabinet maker. This didn't stop Ray from appearing with small groups where his distinctive vocals were in great demand. Ray also played drums and began in the profession as drummer-vocalist at Chez Louis Club, later moving to The Nest where Van Phillips heard him and put him on air. Eventually he joined the

Harry Roy Band, replacing Joe Daniels early in 1937. His first recording session was with Harry in January of that year and his first vocal on disc, 'Swing for sale', came out of that session.

Ray's vocals on Harry Roy's numerous broadcasts during the late thirties brought him to the attention of listeners right across the country. He stayed with the band, adding the vocal refrain on many of their recordings, until 1940 when he joined the R.A.F. With his physique it's not surprising he became a P.T. instructor.

On demob Ray once again found his musical talents in great demand. He was on radio's 'Accordion Club' where he joined The Tito Burns Sextet. Soon he formed his own be-bop group performing at the Bag-o-Nails Club and for a few months, early in 1947, he returned to the Harry Roy Band at the Astor Club, but later that year made the move that was to dominate his life for over a decade.

The Caribbean Trio was a small time group touring in cabaret and variety. Comprising Dick Katz on piano, Lauderick Cayton guitar and Coleridge Goode bass, with the addition of Ray on drums and vocal they became The Ray Ellington Quartet. Their stated musical aim was to present jazz in an enjoyable form, acceptable by most members of the public and they adopted as their theme tune 'Let the good times roll', a Louis Jordan favourite.

The Quartet made their first broadcast on 'Beginners Please' on Saturday 8th November 1947 and had a television spot the same day. Their London concert debut came on Sunday 7th December on one of Ted Heath's Palladium Swing Sessions and audience reception ensured a return date the following February. Over the Christmas - New Year period the Quartet entertained revellers at Weymouth's Sydney Hall and the nearby Chesil Beach Holiday Camp. Next came two weeks at Edinburgh's West End Restaurant, a popular night spot north of the border.

Airings on 'Band Parade' and 'Rhythm Roundabout' continued to enhance the name they were rapidly earning for themselves and on 22nd March 1948 the Quartet made their first variety appearance, at Finsbury Park Empire. By April Parlophone had put them on to disc on the Swing Series label. On the 29th June Radio Luxembourg broadcast the first of a 13 week series featuring the Quartet.

Without doubt the group had created a strong public following, not least due to Ray's special way with a lyric. Their reputation continued to grow with several months' residency at Fischer's Restaurant in London's West End. On Boxing Day 1948 they joined Petula Clark, Bonar Coleno and the Sid Phillips Band in a radio show called 'The Rhubarb Room' set in an imaginary night club. Well received, it returned as a series 'Gala Night at the Rhubarb Room' the following February. They also appeared in the 1949 thriller film set in a newspaper office, 'Paper Orchid'.

In May 1949 Lauderick Cayton left the group for health reasons and 25 year old Laurie Deniz took his place on guitar, then in May 1951 Coleridge Goode was replaced by Len Harrison a colleague of Ray in the Harry Roy Band. Len



only stayed with the group six months and by the end of 1951 the string bass was in the hands of Bob Duffy. Over the years other personnel changes saw Deniz make way for Don Fraser on guitar in 1953 with Jud Proctor taking over from Fraser two years later.

On 9th October 1949 the quartet were a big hit at the 11th annual Jazz Jamboree, held in the huge 4000 seat Kilburn State theatre, with Ray's in his usual cracking form on a crazy hill-billy version of 'She didn't know the gun was loaded'. The same month the group left Parlophone Records, joining Decca and thereby the chance of U.S. releases on the company's London label.

By the early fifties the Quartet had begun to spread their wings beyond these shores, making successful appearances all over Europe. While at home they did several long tours appearing at theatres and Mecca Ballrooms around the country.

If you were an Ellington fan in the fifties, you would probably be a 'Goon' fan too. As such you would never miss a single 'Goon Show'. From its humble beginning as 'Crazy People' in May 1951 right through till the last series in 1959. Ray added his brand of humour to almost every one, with the Quartet providing a musical interlude. The group were also regulars on 'Top Marks' with Alfred Marks, and Ray partnered Edmundo Ros in 'Mr. Ross and Mr. Ray' that filled the Sunday lunchtime Billy Cotton slot from January 1954. They also appeared on T.V on the fortnightly 'Eric Barker Half Hour'.

The Quartet further broadened its horizons (and its sex appeal!) when in September 1953 a shapely 22 year old redheaded singer from Middlesbrough joined the boys. Ray said "she looked good and sang good so I just couldn't turn her down". Marion Ryan became a valuable asset touring with the group for several years, but her appeal was such it was inevitable she would eventually leave to go solo. Shirley Jackson took her place in June 1957 and she in turn gave way to Valerie Masters (who married Dick Katz) five months later.

Ray was not only a performer, he also wrote music. Nat King Cole's 'That's my girl' was one of his, as was 'Old Mother Hubbard' recorded by Ella Fitzgerald. In fact, giving new lyrics and an upbeat tempo to traditional nursery rhymes was a feature of his stage act and over the years he recorded several.

Having met actress Anne Wuest when they worked together on a Kellogg's cornflake TV advertisement, Ray married her early in 1956. Unfortunately, they divorced in 1963, but remained friends.

Dividing their time between variety, club work and dance hall seasons, plus continued radio airings the Quartet were always busy. During 1956 they backed Marion Ryan on the I.T.V series 'Number Please', during which the public phoned in and were given the chance to win prizes by identifying songs played on the show. Normally busy on the variety circuit, the summer months saw them on a 14 week tour of Mecca ballrooms.

Never short of bookings, it was partly this pressure that led founder member and group manager Dick Katz to leave in March 1959 in order to concentrate on his other management

interests. Although Dick continued to manage the group Damian Robinson took over the piano stool.

With the sixties' arrival the continuing list of young lady vocalists moved on with 19 year old office worker and part time singer Carole Simpson replacing Valerie Masters in March 1960. Glandular fever put Carole out of action in December and replacement Maureen Donne stayed nine months until September 1961. Sandra Gale was there just a short while before Susan Maughan joined in November. Susan, still destined for greater things, spent a year with the group before 22 year old Lisa Gordon from Leeds took over.

During 1961 Ray became part owner of The Candelight Room, a posh restaurant in George Street, Croydon where the Quartet played regularly.

Ray Ellington continued performing almost up till the day he died from cancer on 27th February 1985, aged 69.

Ray Ellington Recordings  
(most Quartet sides have vocals by Ray)

Between 1937 and 1940, Ray played drums on over 200 Harry Roy sides, adding vocal on many of them.

#### TOWER

TL 001 ? 'Old Mother Hubbard / Meddlesome Minnie'

PARLOPHONE *all Ray Ellington Quartet*  
(many have vocals by Ray Ellington)

R 3104 Apl 48 'Dream for percussion / The best man'  
R 3109 May 48 'Five guys named Moe / Three bears'  
R 3134 Sep 48 'China bop / It is better to be by yourself'

(with

Mable Lee)

R 3150 Nov 48 'Black eyes / Old Mother Hubbard'  
R 3160 Dec 48 'Christmas song / Christmas story'  
R 3177 Mar 49 'The Maharajah of Magador /

Oooh! look-a-there ain't

she pretty'

R 3192 May 49 'Dick's boogie / Little Bo(p) Peep'  
R 3198 Jun 49 'Dream for bass / You can't judge a book

by

its cover'

R 3215 Aug 49 'Little Miss Muffet / The be-bop'  
R 3226 Oct 49 'Bobbysoxer / Old King Cole'  
R 3249 Jan 50 'I didn't know the gun was loaded /

She's a

home girl'

R 3262 Mar 50 'Shine / Swedish pastry'

DECCA *all Ray Ellington Quartet*  
(many have vocals by Ray Ellington)

F 9351 Mar 50 'Baby I want an answer from you /

Gone for tea'

F 9377 May 50 'Progress / Stompin' at the Savoy'  
F 9496 Nov 50 'Senora / Lonely guy'  
F 9600 Jan 51 'The tailor's blues / That's my girl'  
F 9609 Feb 51 'Let the good times roll / Little red riding hood'

F 9669 Apl 51 'Bright lights and blonde haired women /

Keep off

the grass'

F 9740 Jly 51 'Time takes care of everything / The teddy

bears picnic'  
 F 9863 Feb 52 'Slow coach / Let`s try it'  
 F 9906 May 52 'Why does my heart go boom / Sally'  
 F 9982 Oct 52 'Baltimore rag / In a shady nook'  
 F 10023 Nov 52 'Feet up / Bruce and the spider' (with  
 the

*Stargazers acc by Johnny*

*Douglas orch)*

F 10059 Feb 53 'She wears red feathers / Dixieland  
 tango'

COLUMBIA

*all Ray Ellington Quartet  
 except first two and last two*

DB 3246 Mar 53 (RE with Norrie Paramor orch) 'A  
 beautiful

waste of time / Seven

hills of Rome'

DB 3287 Jly 53 " 'Little red monkey / Kaw-  
 Liga'

DB 3406 Dec 53 'Kiss me again / I`ve got a girl in  
 Kalamazoo'

DB 3420 Feb 54 'Ol man river / All`s going well  
 (with

*Marion Ryan)*

DB 3453 Apr 54 'The owl song / Rub-a-dub-dub'

DB 3500 Jly 54 'A sky blue shirt and a rainbow tie /  
 My

mother`s eyes'

DB 3534 Nov 54 'A.B.C. boogie / Christmas cards'

DB 3562 Jan 55 'Pam poo dey / Framed'

DB 3578 Feb 55 'The naughty lady of Shady Lane /

Mambo Italiano'

DB 3601 May 55 'Ko ko mo / Woodpecker'

DB 3606 May 55 'Earth angel / Two hearts, two kisses'

DB 3636 Jun 55 'The Irish were Egyptians long ago /  
 Play it

boy, play'

DB 3672 Oct 55 'Cloudburst / Pet'

DB 3744 Mar 56 'Hold him tight / Who`s got the  
 money'

DB 3784 Jun 56 'Keep that coffee hot / Lucky 13'

DB 3821 Sep 56 'Left hand boogie / Stranded in the  
 jungle'

DB 3838 Oct 56 'The green door / Giddy-up-a ding  
 dong'

DB 3905 Mar 57 'Marianne / That rock `n` roll man'

DB 4013 Oct 57 (R.E. with Eric Jupp orch) 'Don`t burn  
 me up /

Swaller

tail coat'

DB 4057 Jan 58 'Living doll / Long black nylons'

PYE

N 15159 Sep 58 'The sultan of Bezaaz /  
 You gotta love

somebody'

N 15189 Mar 59 'Charlie Brown / Chip off the old  
 block' (with

*Beryl Stott Singers acc by Bill*

*Shepherd orch)*

ORIOLE

CB 1512 Jly 59 'Carina / I was a little too lonely'

EMBER

EMBS102 Jly 60 (with Tony Crombie orch) 'The  
 madison /

Jump over'

EMBS114 Oct 60 'Tres Jolie / Dracula`s three

daughters'  
 EMBS172 Mar 63 'Too old to cut the mustard / She  
 lied'

EMBS188 Mar 64 'If you can`t say something nice /

the world'

FONTANA

TF 704 May 66 (with Cleo Laine) 'We shouldn`t `ve /

Stablemates'

## Peter ELLIOTT

Born 12<sup>th</sup> June 1932 at Sheerness, Kent, Peter was an Olympic diving champion before entering show business. Joining the world of competitive swimming at the age of 12, he became Junior Springboard Diving Champion of Middlesex a year later. By 1948 he was Springboard Diving Champion of Britain, earning him a place in Britain`s team at the Olympic Games held at Wembley that year. Invited to the states by the council of American Swimming Clubs, he spent a year there, becoming springboard diving champion of New York State, receiving the offer of a film test. There was some talk of a film with American aqua star Esther Williams, but I`m not aware of anything coming of it.

Back in Britain Peter decided to follow his other interest, singing. Building a career, by the mid-fifties he was a regular soloist at London`s Pigalle Restaurant, with one notable visitor there, Frank Sinatra, being impressed enough to ask for a copy of his latest recording.

Peter`s first disc, out on the Parlophone label in September 1957, was 'All at once you love her' from the Rodgers and Hammerstein show 'Pipe Dream', the kind of song Sinatra would go for. There were several more Parlophone sides followed by brief appearances on Top Rank and Fontana, but Peter never hit any great heights on disc. He became one of the regulars on commercial television`s late fifties teenage pop show 'Oh Boy', produced by Jack Good. Jack had possibly spotted him at the Pigalle.

After his TV exposure he began touring, first in a stage version of 'Oh Boy' then in variety and cabaret. During 1960 he did six 'Saturday Spectacular' ATV shows with Cliff Richard and the same year toured with Lonnie Donegan.

Peter Elliott Recordings

PARLOPHONE

R 4355 Sep 57 'All at once you love her / To the  
 aisle'

(acc by Geoff Love

orch)

R 4457 Jly 58 'Devotion / No fool like an old fool '  
 (acc by

Tony

*Osborne orch)*

R 4514 Jan 59 'Call me / Flamingo' (with Rita  
 Williams

*Singers acc by Geoff*

*Love orch)*

R 4529 Feb 59 'Over and over / The young have no  
 time'

(with Rita Williams

*Singers*

acc by Geoff

*Love orch)*

TOP RANK

JAR 390 Jun 60 'Waitin` for the Robert E Lee /

Toot toot

tootsie'

FONTANA

H 325 Jly 61 'Three little peggies / The devil's workshop'

(also issued as Honey Hit

Record TB123)

H 359 Jan 62 'The swinging sailor / Tread softly stranger'

DECCA

F 12067 Feb 65 'Heaven knows / A woman needs'

STRIKE

JH 311 'Thinking / Song is love'

## George ELRICK

Still active well into his nineties, Mrs. Elrick's wee son George enjoyed over seventy years in show-business, twenty-one of them as business manager to bandleader Mantovani. Small, only five feet tall, he was born in Aberdeen on 29th December 1903. As a lad George was a drummer in the Boy's Brigade and before the age of twenty was leading his own 10 piece Embassy Band, that won a Melody Maker dance-band contest.

Having widened his talents, adding vibraphone and xylophone to his drum-kit, George formed a professional band resident at Aberdeen's Beach Dance Hall. Soon, taking the plunge, he came to London and after some time gigging around landed the plum job of second percussionist in the famous Ambrose Orchestra (Max Bacon was Amy's current drummer but often went up front to take a vocal). Listening to the applause Max got when he finished a song led George to decide giving it a try and he began taking singing lessons.

In 1935 Henry Hall invited him to join the BBC Dance Orchestra, where he stayed for two years making probably hundreds of broadcasts. George made several records with the band and added vocal on many jolly songs like 'The music goes round and around', 'Got a brand new suit', 'There's a song they sing in Sing Sing', 'I like bananas because they have no bones' and 'I laughed so hard I nearly died' (the latter being so popular George told music reporter Chris Hayes he had to sing it on radio almost every day). It's pretty obvious that with his cheery manner he was the idea person to sing a comedy song. These weren't his first recordings though, for he had already played drums on a couple of sessions with pianist Billy Mason's orchestra.

From 1937 until the early forties George toured music halls with his own band show and made a number of recordings with his Swing Music Makers. He appeared in some Jack Hylton stage shows and had his own 'George Elrick Band Party' on radio. When the BBC began their long running series 'Housewives Choice' in 1946 George was one of the first presenters, famous for humming along with the show's signature tune 'In party mood', and known as "the smiling voice of radio" became one of the most popular, often on air a month at a time while other presenters only got a week.

'Housewives Choice' continued into the late

seventies, but long before then George had become right-hand man and manager to top orchestra leader Mantovani, accompanying him on numerous tours across America and to other corners of the globe. They remained a first class team until Mantovani died in 1974.

In later years George continued his role in show-business management and wrote his biography, aptly titled 'When You're Smiling'. Ill health dogged him in old age, a life saving stomach operation in 1990 and blood circulation problems in 1996. George's wife of sixty years died in 1991 and he passed away on 15th December 1999, aged 95.

George Elrick Recordings after 1940  
(Vocal unless stated otherwise)

REX

10202 44 (George Elrick Band) 'We don't know where we're going / Nobody else but you' (both v. GE)

REGAL-ZONOPHONE

MR 3801 Feb 48 'Cuddle me in the clover / When you're smiling' ORIOLE

LB 1029 Oct 50 'My ain folk / When there's love at home' (with The Stargazers & Revell Terry Quintet)

LB 1040 Dec 50 'Roamin' in the gloamin' / The land of hills and hather'

LB 1041 Jan 51 'Number one honeymoon lane / Ridin' on a round-a-bout' BELTONA

BL 2593 53 'O my Jock McKay / Lily McNally MacNair'

BL 2595 53 'Medley of Scottish songs'

DECCA

F 10318 Jun 54 'Holiday Singalong'

F 10344 Jly 54 'Paradise Street / Bank of sunshine'

F 10345 Jly 54 'When you spread a little happiness / Breakfast

in bed on Sunday morning' (with

the Stargazers & Cliff

Adams orch)

F 10371 Sep 54 (& The Lumberjacks) 'Gilly Gilly Ossenfeffer Katzenellenbogen-by-the-

sea' (reverse The

Lumberjacks only) PARLOPHONE

R 4352 Sep 57 (& Annie Shand Scott Band) 'Aikey Brae /

Neeps

tae pluck' R 4501 Dec 58 " " 'The muckin' o' Geordie's byre / The

Buchan miller' R 4563 Jun 59 'On the banks of the silvery Dee / Lassie

o' mine' ORIOLE

CB 1558 Sep 60 (& his Gay Gordons) 'Sword dance /

## Embassy Records

Embassy records were not advertised, reviewed in music journals or played on the radio. They never appeared on the hit parade, but nevertheless are estimated to have sold about 100,000 discs every week, saying much for the 'Wonder of Woolies!', because that was the only shop where you could buy them.

Before the war Woolworth Stores had sold their own Eclipse and Crown brand records, but afterwards had dropped out of the business. That was until November 1954 when, totally unannounced, the Embassy label hit the Woolworth counters.

Recorded by Morris Levy's Oriole company at a studio, formally an art gallery, in London's New Bond Street, they used little known artists or unknown band singers plus some 'bigger names' in their declining years. Early vocalists included Larry Cross, Bob Dale, Bill Hurley, Beryl Templeman and Rita Williams. Those taking part on the original recording sessions were unaware what label the discs were for. The man who masterminded and ran the show for Levy was Jack Baverstock.

Embassy went on to 'cover' practically every hit tune of the decade, with the likes of Rikki Henderson, Paul Rich, Johnny Worth and Maureen Evans probably selling more records than any other artist. The reason of course was that they were cheaper than the established labels, and during that era the song was more important, in most cases, than the singer, with many versions of each tune available. To the record buyer who wasn't a fan of any particular singer, this was a low cost alternative sounding as good as many others. Embassy records were often ahead of the hit parade, by studying the latest successes on the American charts they could have their own version out as soon as the original. Levy's was unique among the smaller recording studios in having their own record pressing plant. If pushed they could record a new number on a Thursday and have it on Woolworth counters by Monday.

To keep the cost down singers were paid a set fee with no royalties; the musicians were kept to a minimum and were top session men who could complete the whole thing within an hour. Most of the early arrangements and musical direction was by Johnny Gregory and the Mike Sammes Singers (un-named) appeared on almost every disc, often just to pack out the limited musical backing.

During the late fifties and into the sixties songs became more identified with one singer or group, and often the Embassy version was the only alternative to the chart hit. It was this trend that finally led to the label's demise when Levy's was taken over by American C.B.S. in 1965. They were really only interested in Levy's two record pressing plants, which had already been producing the British C.B.S. releases.

By the time they disappeared there had been almost 700 Embassy singles, plus a large number of E.P's. Although exclusive to W. H.

Woolworth in this country, some of the recordings did appear on various Continental labels.

One peculiarity at Embassy was the fact that the name on the record label did not always identify who recorded it. While some names were genuine, others were made up to hide the singer's real identity. Those that are known to have been false include Bud Ashton (some think he may have been Bert Weedon), Kay Barry, Matt Bryant (who was Brian Matthews), Don Duke, June Lowe (really June Marlow), Hal Munro, David Ross, Redd Wayne. Unfortunately the Levy brothers, Morris and Jacques, had little interest in keeping recording files and even wiped the master tapes after a few weeks, so it has become something of a minefield over the years for researchers trying to unravel who recorded what. It hasn't helped that several well known singers later denied ever recording for Embassy, although they probably did!

## Jack EMBLOW

An accordionist of some merit, Jack and his group have provided the musical backing for the Adams Singers over almost four decades on the radio series 'Sing Something Simple'.

During the early fifties Jack played in several bands, including Mannie Berg at Birmingham Casino and Ian Stewart at London's Berkeley Hotel. By the mid-fifties he was broadcasting regularly, often as a solo artist. He even played the role of a Teddy Boy in the 1954 Ronald Shiner, Margaret Rutherford film 'Aunt Clara', where he also got to play his accordion.

Little did Jack suspect when he led his quartet for the first 'Sing Something Simple' back on 3rd July 1959 that he would still be there almost forty years later.

In 1957, with a trio, he recorded some sides for the Bell Accordion Company and also played in The Continentals, a group on Oriole.

BELL

AB 0002      57 'Luxembourg polka / Hallelujah'

## Ivor EMMANUEL

Born 7<sup>th</sup> November 1927 at Margam near Port Talbot, South Wales Ivor grew up in nearby Pontrhydyfen - also the home town of Richard Burton - where his early life was shattered by a wartime bomb that killed both his parents and his sister. Taken into the family of his mother's sister, his younger brother John moved away to live with his father's brother. Surprisingly it seems they met less than a half dozen times afterwards, although they always kept in touch.

Ivor's vocal ability has always been evident, first in the chapel choir and later on the amateur stage. Beginning work like many of his kinfolk down the mine, in March 1950 he achieved his ambition when he joined the D'Oyly Carte opera company, singing in the chorus until mid-1951. Moving to the West End stage Ivor, with his fine voice, first came to public notice as a member of the chorus of 'South Pacific' at Drury Lane Theatre from November 1951 until September

1953, when he stepped forward during the song 'Dames' to sing the solo line "like the silhouette of a dame".

Ivor became something of a fixture at Drury Lane during the fifties. After 'South Pacific' he played support roles in 'The King and I' and 'Plain and Fancy'. In March 1957 he got his big break with the lead role of Joe Hardy in 'Damn Yankees' at the London Coliseum

Slowly becoming a household name, he made several television appearances, joining both Harry Secombe and Alma Cogan on their 'Saturday Spectacular' shows. Ivor and Alma did an impersonation of the Peter Sellers - Sophia Loren duet from the film 'The Millionairess'.

During the winter holiday season of 1959 Ivor was in 'Fun and Games' at Liverpool's Royal Court Theatre with Beryl Reid and Bill Maynard, the first time the theatre had not had a pantomime in 17 years. The following year he was in 'The Christmas Show' at Southampton Gaumont with Patricia Bredin and The King Brothers. During the sixties and seventies he played regular summer seasons at seaside resorts and also did the occasional panto.

Today Ivor is probably best remembered by many for his only film role, in the 1964 epic 'Zulu', where he plays Private Owen who rallies the men at Rorke's Drift with the rousing battle hymn 'Men of Harlech'.

Married three times, in 1982 he retired with his third wife and three children to Spain's Costa de Sol where, considered by other ex-pats as a bit of a recluse, he enjoyed the quiet life. Ivor died there on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2007 aged 79.

Ivor Emmanuel Recordings  
H.M.V.

POP 863 61 'The Sound of Music / If this isn't love'

COLUMBIA

DB 8126 67 'A man and a woman / Gonna be another hot day'

## George EVANS

George, a Londoner born around 1915, began his professional musical career at the age of 16 playing tenor sax in Sonny Winter's band at Southsea. From there he had spells with Al Lever's band at Brighton and Freddy Bretherton at the notorious Spiders Web Roadhouse on the Watford by-pass. By now George had developed quite a flair for arranging and even took the odd vocal or two. It was probably his reputation as an up and coming arranger that, in 1935, prompted Syd Lipton to offer George a place in his famous Grosvenor House orchestra. Three years later an even better offer came when Geraldo gave up the baggy trousers and abandoned his Gaucho Tango orchestra in favour of a more traditional sound. It was George who arranged most of the numbers Geraldo played over the next four years. Not only on stage but on radio and record it was George's tenor-sax and vocal chords that added a lively touch to the bands offering. Geraldo's signature tune 'Hello again' was a George Evans composition.

During the war George was a member of the Welsh Guards, spending most of his time playing in the regiment band and the station dance orchestra. He even managed to occasionally 'moonlight' with his own group Saxes and Sevens at London clubs and the group appeared at the 1941 Jazz Jamboree.

In September 1944 George assembled an orchestra comprising just ten saxophones, five mellophones plus rhythm, recording several numbers he had arranged for this unusual line up. Decca issued several of these recordings as the George Evans Orchestra directed by Leslie Evans.

Out of uniform in April 1946 George re-formed this unique line-up and toured a series of one night stands followed by a three month season at the Hammersmith Palais, but wartime and its long hours had taken a toll on his health and in September George was diagnosed with TB and entered a sanatorium. The orchestra continued for some time under the leadership of George's brother Leslie.

In January 1947 the outfit received publicity when they became the first band in the country to purchase their own touring coach, which featured 21 sleeping bunks. Sadly little more than a year later it was going nowhere when the band folded due to lack of bookings. While being critically acclaimed by musicians its unusual line up and lack of radio exposure put off many promoters.

By the summer of 1948 George had recovered enough to re-join his old boss Geraldo as staff arranger and just over a year later he was back on the road with his own 18 piece (6 saxes, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones and 4 rhythm) that made their debut appearance at Hammersmith Palais 10<sup>th</sup> October 1949. After a series of one-night-stands the band, in 1951, took up residency at the Oxford Galleries ballroom Newcastle where they remained for seven years.

When the late fifties change in music taste began to kill off the big bands George, although only being in his early forties, decided to retire from the music business. Little was heard of him until 1985 when he assembled a band of local musicians - he had kept in touch with the local scene by encouraging Newcastle's youth orchestras - to recreate some of his old compositions and arrangements, performed at a sell out concert to celebrate his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. He died in 1992.

George Evans Recordings

PARLOPHONE

F 1279 Dec 38 (vocal with The Band Waggoners  
dir by Phil Cardew) 'I  
got love'  
F 1341 Jan 39 " "  
'They say'

H.M.V. (vocal with Geraldo's orchestra)

BD 5519 Sep 39 The man with the mandolin'

COLUMBIA (vocal with Geraldo's Savoy Hotel  
orch)

FB 2305 Oct 39 'How ashamed I was (with Cyril  
Grantham)

FB 2350 Jan 40 'Over the rainbow'  
 FB 2397 Feb 40 'Give a little whistle'

PARLOPHONE (vocal with Geraldo's orch)

F 1752 Jun 40 'I was watching a man painting a fence'  
 F 1809 Jan 41 'All in favour say "Aye" (with Dorothy Carless

& Len

Camber)

F 1821 Mar 41 'When that man is dead and gone'  
 F 1842 May 41 'It's foolish but it's fun'  
 F 1851 May 41 'Prairie Mary (with Dorothy Carless)'  
 F 1852 Jly 41 'I came. I saw, I conga'd'  
 F 1859 Aug 41 'Aurora'  
 F 1869 Sep 41 'Corn silk'  
 F 1880 Dec 41 'Ma-Ma-Maria'  
 F 1894 Jan 42 'When I see an elephant fly'  
 F 1896 Feb 42 'The whistler's mother-in-law'  
 F 1901 Mar 42 'Tis autumn'  
 F 1907 May 42 'Deep in the heart of Texas

(with Three Boys

& a Girl)

F 1913 Jun 42 'Don't sit under the apple tree' "

"

F 1934 Jly 42 'The lamplighter's serenade' "

"

F 1937 Aug 42 'Three little sisters (with Beryl Davis-Georgina-

Doreen Villiers & Len

Camber)

F 1943 Sep 42 'Jingle jangle jingle'  
 F 1944 Sep 42 'Sweet Eloise'  
 F 1948 Oct 42 'Breathless (with Beryl Davis)  
 F 1953 Nov 42 'Who wouldn't love you (with Doreen Villiers)  
 F 1954 Nov 42 'Yankee doodle boy / Old uncle Bud'  
 F 1960 Dec 42 'Der Fuehrer's face (with Three boys & a Girl)  
 F 1963 Dec 42 'I got a gal in Kalamazoo'

DECCA George Evans Orchestra

F 9448 Aug 44 'Great day / Sweet and lovely'  
 F 8514 Apl 45 'Carry me back to the lone prairie / The toy

trumpet' (both recorded

Sept 1944)

(other 1944 Decca recordings by the orchestra were

only issued on later LP's)

F 8609 Jan 46 (vocal with the Squadronaires)  
 'It's only a paper moon'

PARLOPHONE (vocal with Geraldo's orch)

F 2315 Oct 48 'So tired'  
 F 2316 Oct 48 'That's you'  
 F 2330 Jan 49 'Big brass band from Brazil / Worry worry'

## Maureen EVANS

Born at Cardiff on 25th March 1940 Maureen began singing in the school choir (being Welsh that's not surprising) and graduated to taking the solo at school concerts. An appearance on a Lord Mayor's charity concert when aged 14 brought her to the notice of Reg Phillips, manager of Cardiff's New Theatre, who gave her a week in variety. At sixteen she made her radio debut on 'Welsh Rarebit'. More shows around Wales followed, including a number of summer seasons at Llandudno. Maureen also soon

became a regular face on TWW, the local commercial television channel. During all this time she was still a full time student at Cardiff College of Music and Drama (Anthony Hopkins was a fellow student).

It was in 1958 when Maureen, now 18 years of age, began recording for the Embassy label, each time travelling up to their London studio just for the session. Sold only in Woolworth stores they were all cover versions of current hits, and her first was a double helping of Connie Francis with 'Stupid cupid' and 'Carolina moon'. Over the next fifteen months she made ten such cover discs, none of them ever being played on radio or turning up on any chart, or even getting recognition in the music press. Embassy issues never did.

In fact it took until October 1959 before she was "discovered" by Arthur Askey who gave her a spot on his ITV 'Saturday Spectacular' show, with the result that the next day she received much praise and numerous offers of work.

Oriole, the manufacturer of Embassy records, at last realised her value and promoted her to their own label. By the end of 1959 many reviewers were saying she was the "most exciting female prospect to hit British pop singing in years". It was her second Oriole disc 'The big hurt' in January 1960 that put Maureen into the hit parade, 26th on the New Musical Express listing, just ahead of Toni Fisher's big US version. Radio Luxembourg made it their Record of the Week and this twenty year old veteran with over ten discs to her credit had finally 'arrived'. Her next recording, 'Love kisses and heartaches' also made the charts and was again chosen Record of the Week by Luxembourg.

Oriole began putting a new Maureen Evans disc out about every other month. Three more were hit parade entries: 'Paper roses' later in 1960 - also a top ten hit for The Kaye Sisters, 'I love how you love me' in 1964, but her biggest success by far came in February 1962 when 'Like I do', a song she made her very own (and used as title of her Oriole LP), reached No.5 on the NME chart (Music Week, the trade paper, put it at No.3).

Maureen was now spending a lot of time in London, not just recording but also at the radio and television studios. For over two years she was a regular on the BBC Light Programme's Saturday evening series 'Easy Beat', introduced by Brian Matthew. She had teamed up with Brian before, on the Embassy cover version of the Peter Sellers - Sophia Loren comedy number 'Goodness gracious me'. Only on that occasion they were labelled as Matt Bryant and Linda Joyce (Embassy had a habit of changing artists names). Maureen did many TV appearances on pop shows like 'Music Shop' and even sang with Ted Heath's Orchestra on 'Bandstand'. But she kept returning to Cardiff, especially for a special day in March 1961 when she married local estate agent Tudor Thomas. After the birth of daughter Lynette a year later Maureen began spending more time at home.

In 1963 she was back on the road touring with Frank Ifield, and she sang the Leslie Bricusse song 'Pick the petals' as one of the contenders for Britain's entry in the Eurovision

Song Contest (but Ronnie Carroll got the nomination with 'Say wonderful things'). She made a few more records and then faded from the scene.

Since then Maureen has played several summer seasons at Marbella in Spain. A CD, 'Timeless Memories', that was on sell in Tesco stores before Christmas 1998 had two tracks by her. Both Maureen's children have followed in their mother's footsteps, Lynette has appeared in cabaret and second daughter Susanna Tudor-Thomas is an opera singer voted Young Welsh Singer of the Year 1997.

Maureen, who says she was painfully shy as a child, in 1999, with second husband Roger Godier, opened a music and stage school in Cardiff to help talented youngsters to overcome their fear of performing in public.

Maureen Evans Recordings  
EMBASSY

WB 300 Sep 58 'Stupid cupid / Carolina moon' (*acc by*

*Ken*

*Jones orch)*

WB 303 Oct 58 'Fever / Born too late'

WB 309 Nov 58 'The hula hoop song / Hoopa hoola' (*acc by*

*Gordon*

*Franks orch)*

WB 313 Nov 58 'Someday you'll want me to want you /

I'll get by"

WB 316 Jan 59 'The day the rains came / You always hurt

the one you love' (*acc by Gordon*

*Franks orch)*

WB 319 Jan 59 'Kiss me honey honey love me /

To know him is to

love him'

WB 344 Jun 59 'May you always / Goodbye Jimmy goodbye'

(*acc by Barry*

*King orch)*

WB 348 Jly 59 'Lipstick on your collar /

What a difference a

day made'

WB 356 Sep 59 'Broken hearted melody / Plenty good lovin''

WB 371 Dec 59 'Among my souvenirs / Happy anniversary'

ORIOLE

CB 1517 Nov 59 'The years between /

Don't want the

moonlight'

CB 1533 Jan 60 'The big hurt / I can't begin to tell you'

CB 1540 Mar 60 'Love kisses and heartaches /

We just couldn't

say goodbye'

CB 1550 May 60 'Paper roses / Please understand'

CB 1563 Jly 60 'My little corner of the world / Mama

wouldn't like it'

CB 1578 Jan 61 'As long as he needs me / Where is love'

CB 1581 Nov 60 'Why don't you believe me / Till '

CB 1613 Apl 61 'My foolish heart / Oh gypsy, oh gypsy'

CB 1743 Jun 62 'Never in a million years / We had words'

CB 1760 Aug 62 'Like I do / Starlight starbright' (*acc by*

*Frank*

*Barber orch)*

CB 1804 Feb 63 'Pick the petals / Melancholy me'

CB 1806 Mar 63 'Tomorrow is another day /

Acapulco

Mexico'

CB 1851 Jly 63 'What a difference a day made /

Oh

what a guy'

CB 1875 Nov 63 'Like you used to do / As you love her'

CB 1906 Jan 64 'I love how you love me / John John'

CB 1939 Jun 64 'He knows I love him too much /

Don't

believe him'

CB 1969 Oct 64 'I've often wondered / Get away'

C.B.S.

201752 65 'Never let him go / Poco sole'

201773 65 'All the angels sang / Speak sugar

speak'

202621 67 'It takes a little time /

Somewhere

there's love'

3222

68 'I almost called your name /

Searching

for home'